

NATURALOPY

PRECEPT 17

FORGIVENESS





NATURALOPY

CELEBRATING HUMANITY

Since time immemorial, our ancestors have gone to great lengths to fabricate myths and fables to answer the six primary existential questions of life:

- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

For thousands of years, the East Indians, Sumerians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, Mayans, and other great civilizations of the past have conjured fairy tales of a god or group of gods to justify their existence. We now look at their abandoned gods and think how naive and backward our ancestors must have been.

Today, the Christians, Jews, and Muslims hold steadfast to the idea that an omnipotent figure created the Universe and Earth 6,000 - 10,000 years ago. And that all humans were seeded by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden somewhere in modern day Iran or Iraq. These beliefs persist despite the fact that science has refuted and disclaimed those assertions with empirical evidence—evidence that can be verified by anyone willing to do the research. Most don't, thus the perpetual conflict between the Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

The Universe is roughly 13.8 billion years old; the Earth 4.6 billion years old; Humans are the product of evolution, 4.3 billion years in the making.

There is no need to attribute to the gods what Humanity has achieved.

Naturalopy (naCHərə lō pē)

noun

1. The philosophy of adopting universal knowledge and collective wisdom from historical and contemporary sources to form a belief system.
2. The Naturalopist belief system, founded on the shared knowledge and experiences of Humanity; modern philosophy; natural philosophy.

Naturalopist (naCHərə lō pist)

noun

1. One who believes in universal knowledge and collective wisdom as a basis for her or his moral guidelines and belief system; naturalist; spiritualist.
2. One who embraces the 20 Naturalopic Precepts as a guideline for a worldview; acknowledges the law of cause and effect.
3. One who adopts preeminent ideologies and philosophies regardless of their origin; objective mindset.

Naturalopic (naCHərə lō pik)

adjective

Of or relating to the precepts of Naturalopy; collective knowledge, objectivity, cause and effect, empirical evidence, spirituality, transparency, natural philosophy, Nature; equality before the Law, beneficial to Humanity.

The 20 Precepts of Naturalopy

Precept (pre sept)
noun

A rule, directive, or principle that guides one’s actions, particularly as pertains to moral conduct.

Naturalopy is structured into 20 primary precepts, most of them with supporting precepts.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Freewill | 11. Happiness |
| 2. Karma | 12. Love |
| 3. Simplicity | 13. Dreams |
| 4. Health | 14. Wisdom |
| 5. Spirituality | 15. Success |
| 6. Compassion | 16. Suffering |
| 7. Purpose | 17. Forgiveness |
| 8. Virtue | 18. Salvation |
| 9. Attitude | 19. Liberty |
| 10. Character | 20. Time |

When taken as a whole and expanded in detail, the Naturalopic framework of 20 precepts is more comprehensive in scope than any single religion or philosophy because it embraces all available knowledge.

Life can be complex, therefore our moral guidelines and belief system are only complete, accurate, and objective when they’re derived from multiple historical and contemporary sources, regardless of their origin.

Life did not come with a manual. Life is a learning process. We make mistakes; we are not sinners. The better choices we make, the higher our quality of life. But we can only make better choices when we are enlightened...

NATURALOPY

PRECEPT 17

F O R G I V E N E S S



PRECEPT 17

FORGIVENESS

forgiveness

mercy, clemency, compassion, grace, charity, vindication, pardon

1. The action of forgiving (accepting errors or shortcomings in Self and others).

Forgiveness is about remedying transgressions against us in the right way. The right way means that the transgressor is punished and we have peace of mind. Although, we do not need to deliver the punishment ourselves—the justice system and karma are adequate punishers. However, we do have to forgive the transgressors to attain peace of mind.

Pragmatically, justice and forgiveness are different processes—never confuse justice with forgiveness. We can have justice applied to the offender and at the same time forgive them—justice needs to take its course if the transgression is illegal, in order to reduce the offender's chance of doing it again to another person. For example, domestic violence, stalking, harassment, emotional abuse (mental anguish), physical abuse, drugging, sexual assault (rape), and even uttering threats are all recognized as indictable offenses under most common law jurisdictions. If we are the victim of any of them, we must report them, speak out against them, and let due process take place. While justice takes its course, we should forgive the wrongdoer to rid ourselves of a burden. Forgiveness does not mean we condone or accept what someone has done; forgiveness means that we want to distance ourselves from the transgressor and the event, as to unburden ourselves. This allows us to devote our time and energy to productive activities rather than the past.

Aside from the obvious criminal laws, there are also tort laws (lawsuit in civil court) that protect us from egregious transgressions. The three types of tort laws are inten-

tional torts, negligence torts, and liability torts. As one example, unintentional/intentional emotional distress (torment, mental anguish) causing injury, unhappiness, or loss of income is a tort and can be pursued in civil court. In some jurisdictions, adultery can also be pursued in a civil court or criminal court.

Legality and philosophy are different spheres. If a wrong, either civil or criminal, has been performed against us, report it and let due process take its course. Then forgive the tortfeasor or criminal. By reporting a crime to the justice system, we reduce the chance of the culprit hurting another person. However, in a case of a tort (civil wrongdoing), use common sense:

Is it worth our time and energy?
Are we doing it only to seek revenge?
Will it help someone else?

Again, never confuse justice with forgiveness. We should impose both, but never confuse the two as being the same. Justice is for the common good; forgiveness is for our personal good... and peace of mind.

As for the slights, or perceived slights, that are part of daily life—there is so much to do, who has time for small, inconsequential silliness? Let karma take care of the transgressors.

Forgive and move on.



I believe in the forgiveness of sin and the redemption of ignorance.



Adlai E. Stevenson, Jr.



Those who cannot forgive others break the bridge over which they themselves must pass.

Confucius

Always forgive, but never forget. If you forget, when the lesson of the past is needed, it may be lost. But if you forgive, when the lesson of the past is heeded, it may be what is needed so you can move forward in life.



Mattie J.T. Stepanek

Forgiveness is me giving up my right to hurt you for hurting me.



Naturalopist

True forgiveness is when you can say,
“Thank you for that experience.”



Oprah Winfrey

A grudge is the heaviest thing to carry in life.
You need to forgive in order to move on.



Motherly Advice



The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness
is the attribute of the strong.

Mahatma Gandhi



When you hold resentment toward another, you are
bound to that person or condition by an emotional link
that is stronger than steel. Forgiveness is the only way
to dissolve that link and get free.

Katherine Ponder

Once a woman has forgiven her man, she must not reheat his sins for breakfast.



Marlene Dietrich



It is easier to forgive an enemy than to forgive a friend.

William Blake



To forgive is the highest, most beautiful form of love. In return, you will receive untold peace and happiness.

Robert Muller

Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future.



Paul Boese

Without being forgiven, released from the consequences of what we have done, our capacity to act would, as it were, be confined to a single deed from which we could never recover; we would remain the victims of its consequences forever, not unlike the sorcerer's apprentice, who lacked the magic formula to break the spell.



Hannah Arendt

Always forgive your enemies—nothing annoys them so much.



Oscar Wilde

He who has not forgiven an enemy has never yet tasted one of the most sublime enjoyments of life.



Johann Lavater



If you haven't forgiven yourself something, how can you forgive others?

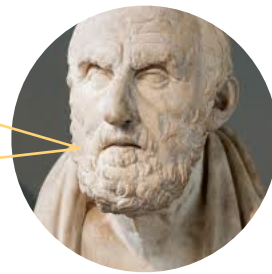
Dolores Huerta

Only the brave know how to forgive. A coward never forgave; it is not in his nature.



Laurence Sterne

Forgiveness is better than revenge, for forgiveness is the sign of a gentle nature, but revenge is the sign of a savage nature.



Epictetus



Keeping score of old scores and scars, getting even and one-upping, always makes you less than you are.

Malcolm Forbes

Forgiveness does not always lead to a healed relationship. Some people are not capable of love, and it may be wise to let them go along with your anger. Just wish them well and take care of yourself.



Naturalopist

To forgive is the highest, most beautiful form of love. In return, you will receive untold peace and happiness.



Robert Muller



A winner rebukes and forgives; a loser is too timid to rebuke and too petty to forgive.

Sidney J. Harris

One of the secrets of a long and fruitful life is to forgive everybody everything every night before you go to bed.



Ann Landers



Walter Kauffman

The supreme act of courage is that of forgiving ourselves.

That which I was not but could have been.
That which I would have done but did not do.

Can I find the fortitude to remember in truth,
to understand, to submit, to forgive
and to be free to move on in time?

In our society, forgiveness is often seen as weakness. People who forgive those who have hurt them or their family are made to look as if they really don't care about their loved ones. But forgiveness is tremendous strength. It is the action of someone who refuses to be consumed by hatred and revenge.



Helen Prejean

Practicing forgiveness does not mean accepting wrong doing.



Dalai Lama XIV

A crude way of forgiving another person is to say, "You are forgiven. You have been a waste of my time and energy. I want nothing to do with you anymore. Now, go waste someone else's time."



Trung Nguyen

Forgiveness is the answer to the child's dream of a miracle by which what is broken is made whole again, what is soiled is again made clean.

Forgiveness breaks the chain of causality because he who forgives you—out of love—takes upon himself the consequences of what you have done. Forgiveness, therefore, always entails a sacrifice.



Dag Hammarskjöld



Forgiveness is a favour we do for ourselves, not a favour we do to the other party.

Harold S. Kushner

Forgive yourself for not knowing what you didn't know before you learned it.



Doe Zantamata

Hate no one, no matter how much they've wronged you. Live humbly, no matter how wealthy you become. Think positively, no matter how hard life is. Give much, even if you've been given little. Keep in touch with the ones who have forgotten you, and forgive who has wronged you, and do not stop praying for the best for those you love.



Ali Ibn Abi Talib RA



Until we have seen someone's darkness we don't really know who they are. Until we have forgiven someone's darkness, we don't really know what love is.

Marianne Williamson

To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.



Lewis Smedes

Life becomes easier when you learn to accept the apology you never got.



R. Brault

Life is too short to wake up in the morning with regrets. So love the people who treat you right, forget about the ones who don't and believe that everything happens for a reason. If you get a chance, take it. If it changes your life, let it. Nobody said that it'd be easy, they just promised it would be worth it.



Harvey MacKay



As I walked out the door toward my freedom I knew that if I did not leave all the anger, hatred, and bitterness behind, I would still be in prison.

Nelson Mandela

REVENGE

revenge

spitefulness, satisfaction, fight, malevolence, vendetta, vengeance, reprisal

1. Any form of personal retaliatory action against an individual, institution, or group for some perceived harm or injustice.

For every wrong that has occurred, we can perceive ourselves as a victim of circumstance, a victim of choice, or neither (not a victim at all). As a perceived victim of circumstance, we become a victim of our own mind, and therefore the desire for revenge. However, personal revenge should never be an option for a rational person. Depending on the act, let karma or the justice system perform the revenge for us. Seldom is an act performed in isolation—it has a previous act. For slights and mistreatments, eventually the perpetrator will be buried with guilt and be punished by discomfort, they'll make mistakes, then the balancing force of karma will take over.

In seeking personal revenge, we are telling ourselves, “I have nothing better to do with my time than to spend it on someone I pity, or even detest.”

Revenge doesn't change what has happened, it only provides temporary satisfaction. Once that satisfaction subsides, we're back on the revenge treadmill until we become consumed with it. Abstain from seeking revenge. There is absolutely nothing for us to gain by having a personal vendetta. Personal revenge is a waste of time and energy.

One purpose in life is to do good for ourselves, and not bad to another person. We gain nothing by doing evil to another being—we build nothing and nothing endures, just painful regrets later in life. We need not waste precious time and energy seeking revenge ourselves. Karma and the justice system are the best revenge mechanisms.

Forgive and live a life so productive that even the transgressors will envy.

The best revenge is to be unlike him who performed the injury.



Marcus Aurelius

The best revenge is massive success.



Frank Sinatra

When another person makes you suffer, it is because he suffers deeply within himself, and his suffering is spilling over. He does not need punishment; he needs help. That's the message he is sending.



Thích Nhất Hạnh



Revenge, at first though sweet. Bitter ere long back on itself recoils.

John Milton

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.



Martin Luther King, Jr.

I want revenge, but I don't want to screw up my karma.



Susane Colasanti



There is no revenge so complete as forgiveness.

Josh Billings

Revenge can be bitter sweet, but if you sit back and watch, karma can be pure entertainment.



Narendra Nekkanti



In taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy, but in passing it over he is superior.

Francis Bacon



When you have the power to screw people over and you don't—well, that's when you get to show who you really are.

Joseph Finder



Revenge is the law of the outlaws.

Laura Blumefeld



Revenge is like biting a dog because the dog bit you.

Austin O'Malley



Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love; this is the eternal rule.

Buddha

Retribution often means that we eventually do to ourselves what we have done unto others.



Eric Hoffer

The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting.



Sun Tzu



Naturalopist

Bad things will happen in life. People will hurt you. But you can't use that as an excuse to hurt someone else back.

Forgive and move on.



An eye for an eye will only make the whole world blind.

Mahatma Gandhi



He who has revenge in his power, and does not use it, is the greater man.

Wellins Calcott

Harmful people are hurt-filled and need our support, not our opinions.



Naturalopist



Only the dead have seen the end of war.

Plato

Before you embark on a journey
of revenge, dig two graves.



Confucius



Those who are free of resentful
thoughts surely find peace.

Buddha

An immature person seeks revenge. A ma-
ture person moves on while karma does her
dirty work.



Naturalopist



Whenever encountering a troublesome person,
do not identify him as being cruel or stupid or
rude or anything else like that. Instead, see him as
a frightened person.

Vernon Howard

The best revenge is moving on and getting over it. Don't give someone the satisfaction of watching you suffer.



Naturalopist



The best revenge of all: happiness. Nothing drives people crazier than seeing someone have a good life.

Chuck Palahniuk



It is a man's own mind, not his enemy or foe, that lures him to evil ways.

Buddha

Simi Ngr

Weak people believe in revenge.
Strong people believe in forgiving.
And Intelligent people believe in ignoring!



PEACE

peace of mind

comfort, pleasure, contentment, well-being, bliss, serenity, delight, elation,
clear conscience, tranquility, calmness, inner peace

1. The absence of mental stress or anxiety.

If peace of mind is the absence of mental stress or anxiety, a person who doesn't have peace of mind needs to ask, "What is causing my stress or anxiety?" In many, their mental anguish is caused by their interpretation of external events—things beyond their control. What happens outside of us is not in our control; we can only control our thoughts and behavior. That is, we can only resolve internal conflicts, not external events. And one pressing internal conflict we face is whether to forgive our transgressors, or perceived transgressors. Well, forgiving provides solace, thus peace of mind.

Another way to look at peace of mind is having a clear conscience—knowing that we are living in accordance with Nature, not harming ourself or another being. As examples, addiction and vice bring turmoil and dis-ease; and desiring something or someone that is not within our power invites mental anguish. In general, wanting to control something not within our power brings stress and anxiety; two examples are living in the past and worrying about the future. Peace of mind is about living in the present.

According to Napoleon Hill, there are four steps to peace of mind:

1. Have a purpose, a goal, a direction, something to work toward everyday.
2. Have a plan—a definitive plan with concrete steps and timeline.
3. Disregard all negative influences—avoid negative people, negative news, etc.
4. Partner with people who encourage us to work toward that goal everyday.

Of all the enduring luxuries of life, peace of mind is the most desired and elusive.

Every goal, every action, every thought, every feeling one experiences, whether it be consciously or subconsciously known, is an attempt to increase one's level of peace of mind.



Sydney Madwed



Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without.

Buddha

When you find peace within yourself, you become the kind of person who can live at peace with others.



Peace Pilgrim

If there is light in the soul, there will be beauty in the person.
If there is beauty in the person, there will be harmony in the house.
If there is harmony in the house, there will be order in the nation.
If there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.

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Chinese Proverb

Success is peace of mind, which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to become the best of which you are capable.



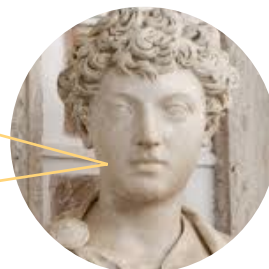
John Wooden

When you've seen beyond yourself, then you may find, peace of mind is waiting there.



George Harrison

He who lives in harmony with himself lives in harmony with the universe.



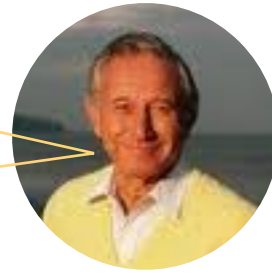
Marcus Aurelius

If you wish to experience peace, provide peace for another.



Dalai Lama XIV

Peace of mind comes from not wanting to change others.



Gerald Jampolsky

Nothing is more conducive to peace of mind than not having any opinion at all.



Georg C. Lichtenberg



Thomas Kempis

First keep the peace within yourself, then you can also bring peace to others.



Ralph Waldo Emerson

For every minute you remain angry, you give up sixty seconds of peace of mind.

Promise yourself to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.



Christian D. Larson

If you have inner peace, nobody can force you to be a slave to the outer reality.

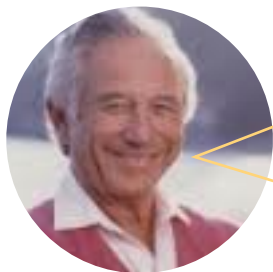


Sri Chinmoy

Nothing is a greater impediment to being on good terms with others than being ill at ease with yourself.



Honore de Balzac



I can have peace of mind only when I forgive rather than judge.

Gerald Jampolsky



Better than a thousand hollow words, is one word that brings peace.

Buddha

There is no greater wealth in the world than peace of mind.



Naturalopist

Those who are at war with others are not at peace with themselves.



William Hazlit

Do not overrate what you have received, nor envy others. He who envies others does not obtain peace of mind.



Buddha

If you want peace, stop fighting. If you want peace of mind, stop fighting with your thoughts.



Peter McWilliams



My peace of mind is not disturbed today by things beyond my control.

Naturalopist

World peace, like community peace, does not require that each man love his neighbor—it requires only that they live together with mutual tolerance, submitting their disputes to a just and peaceful settlement.



John F. Kennedy



Set peace of mind as your highest goal and organize your life around it.

Brian Tracy



I have always believed that exercise is the key not only to physical health but to peace of mind.

Nelson Mandela

Peace of mind produces right values, right values produce right thoughts. Right thoughts produce right actions.



Naturalopist



Human beings are of such nature that they should have not only material facilities but spiritual sustenance as well. Without spiritual sustenance, it is difficult to get and maintain peace of mind.

Dalai Lama XIV

Peace: It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work; it means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart.



Naturalopist

Only the just man enjoys peace of mind.



Epicurus

Success in highest and noblest form calls for peace of mind and enjoyment and happiness which comes only to the man who has found the work he likes best.



Napoleon Hill

I keep my mind focused on peace, harmony, health, love and abundance. Then, I can't be distracted by doubt, anxiety, or fear.



Edith Armstrong



Do not let the behaviour of others destroy your inner peace.

Dalai Lama XIV

METAMORPHOSIS

metamorphosis

evolution, change, transmutation, rebirth

1. A noticeable change in character, appearance, function or condition.

We change and elevate to a higher consciousness when these conditions are present:

1. We have resolved internal conflicts.
2. We have forgiven ourselves for our transgressions toward others.
3. We have forgiven others for their transgressions against us.
4. We have attained an objective mindset.
5. We have peace of mind.

Possessing an objective mindset is crucial to metamorphosis. An objective mindset is the uncanny ability to accept what is right rather than who is right. For example, all those slights and transgressions against us, were they based on facts or were they *perceived* slights and transgressions? A subjective mindset believes that we are the victim of circumstance and rarely is it our fault. A subjective mindset is frequently wrong. The interpretations of a subjective mind is one-sided, biased. It chooses to perceive who is right rather than what is right.

If we recount some of the defining moments of our past, were we an innocent victim of circumstance, or were we a victim of choice? Or a bit of both? The truth is often in the middle. Change can only come when we accept responsibility for our past and our role in it. In each defining moment, we had an alternative choice. The subjective mindset won't accept it because it's a blow against the ego. It hurts to admit we were wrong.

A transition from a subjective mindset to an objective mindset is arduous and vexing because it requires us to let go of our old worldview. An objective mindset (what is

right rather than who is right) requires us to reinterpret personal events, forgo traditional knowledge passed through culture, and entertain new ideas and perspectives. Metamorphosis requires that we develop an objective mindset to accept what is right rather than who is right. For example, what is right is to always forgive oneself and others.

Many people die as they were born, never knowing the truth about life and the meaning of life. This is because they choose to see the world through a subjective mind—their interpretation of events as truth, even though erroneous.

Develop an objective mindset and metamorphosis will follow naturally.



If you want to fly, you have to give up the stuff that weights you down.

Toni Morrison

Life is hard yard by yard. Inch by inch, it's a cinch.



John Bytheway

Don't waste your time looking back for what you have lost, move on. For life wasn't meant to be traveled backward, but to be lived forward.



Naturalopist



You can only lose what you cling to.

Buddha

Never regret. If it's good, it's wonderful. If it's bad, it's experience.



Victoria Holt

The greatest healing therapy is friendship and love.



Hubert H. Humphrey

Sometimes the hardest part isn't letting go but rather learning to start over.



Nicole Sobon

The truth is, unless you let go, unless you forgive yourself, unless you forgive the situation, unless you realize that the situation is over, you cannot move forward.



Steve Maraboli

Nothing ever goes away until it has taught us what we need to know.



Pema Chodron



Holding a grudge is letting someone live rent-free in your head.

Naturalopist



I think that the power is the principle. The principle of moving forward, as though you have the confidence to move forward, eventually gives you confidence when you look back and see what you've done.

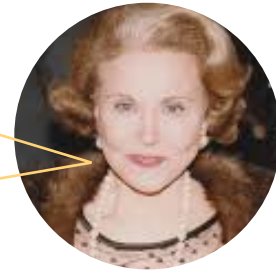
Robert Downey, Jr.

Content thyself to be obscurely good. When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway, the post of honor is a private station.



Joseph Addison

Some people believe holding on and hanging in there are signs of great strength. However, there are times when it takes much more strength to know when to let go and then do it.



Ann Lander



Forgive and move on with your life because the person you haven't forgiven has forgiven themselves and moved on.

Naturalopist



They can't stop talking about my transformation. But I can only do it once in my lifetime. If only they knew that they can transform at any time and in countless ways.

Naturalopist

Nothing happens until the pain of remaining the same outweighs the pain of change.



Arthur Burt

Don't dwell on what went wrong. Instead, focus on what to do next. Spend your energy moving forward together towards an answer.



Denis Waitley



Letting go doesn't mean giving up, but rather accepting that there are things that cannot be.

Naturalopist



Cry me a river, build a bridge, and get over it.

Justin Timberlake



Cry. Forgive. Learn. Move on. Let your tears water the seeds of your future happiness.

Steve Maraboli



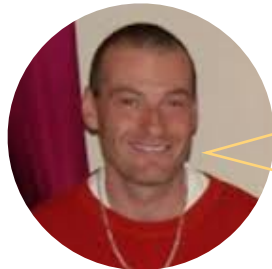
Get mad, then get over it.

Colin Powell

People can be more forgiving than you can imagine. But you have to forgive yourself. Let go of what's bitter and move on.



Victoria Holt



A bridge can still be built, while the bitter waters are flowing beneath.

Anthony Liccione



If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.

Henry Ford

In order to move on, you must understand why you felt what you did and why you no longer need to feel it.

Mitch Albom



Sometimes you have to move on without certain people. If they're meant to be in your life, they'll catch up.

Naturalopist



*no
more*

There comes a time when you have to stop crossing oceans for people who wouldn't jump puddles for you.

Naturalopist

Anything I cannot transform into something marvelous, I let go.



Anais Nin

ORIGIN

evolution

change, growth, development, progression, transformation, natural process

1. The change in the genetic composition of a population over successive generations.

abiogenesis

spontaneous order, spontaneous generation

1. The natural process of life arising from non-living matter such as simple inorganic compounds.

The origin of life debate consists of two camps: Evolutionists versus Creationists. Or science versus religion, abiogenesis versus biogenesis, empirical evidence versus myth, and Darwinism versus Creationism. These theories are incompatible with each other. In many cases, they contradict each other. However, there is only one truth.

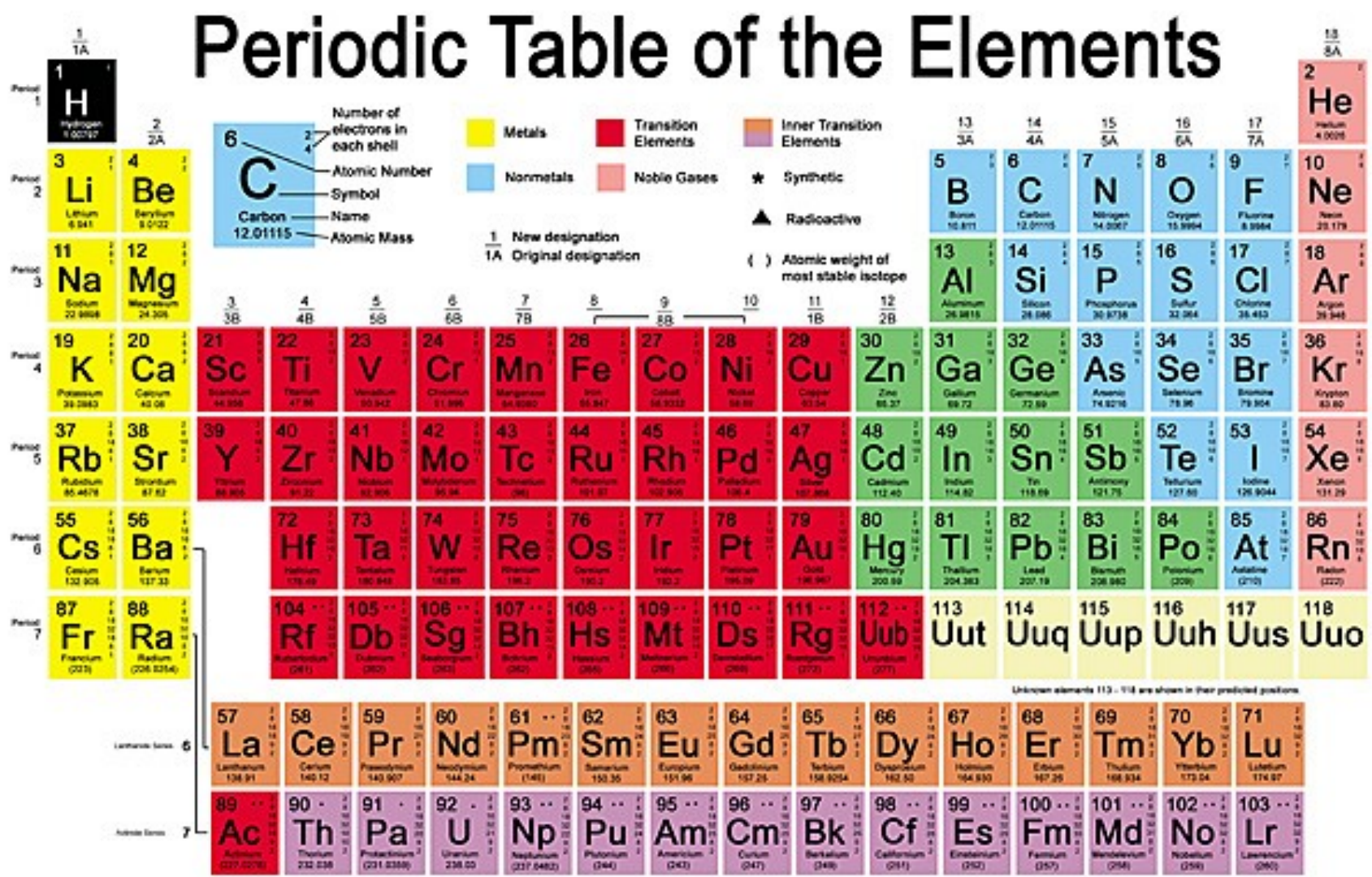
Creationists believe that roughly 6,000 - 10, 000 years ago, god created the Universe and Earth in 6 days and rested on the 7th day, thus Sunday. Creationists also believe in biogenesis—that only living organisms can create other living organisms. Creationists point to the Periodic Table of the Elements, in which all the elements that make up the Universe are inorganic (not living matter, not biological). Therefore, if everything in the Universe is made of inorganic elements, how did organic (biological) life originate from lifeless matter? Creationists also point to the astounding large odds to dismiss the theory of entropy (randomness). Creationists also point to the “missing link” in the theory of evolution—if humans evolved from apes, then why are apes still around?

entropy

decay, breakup, randomness, degeneration, disorder

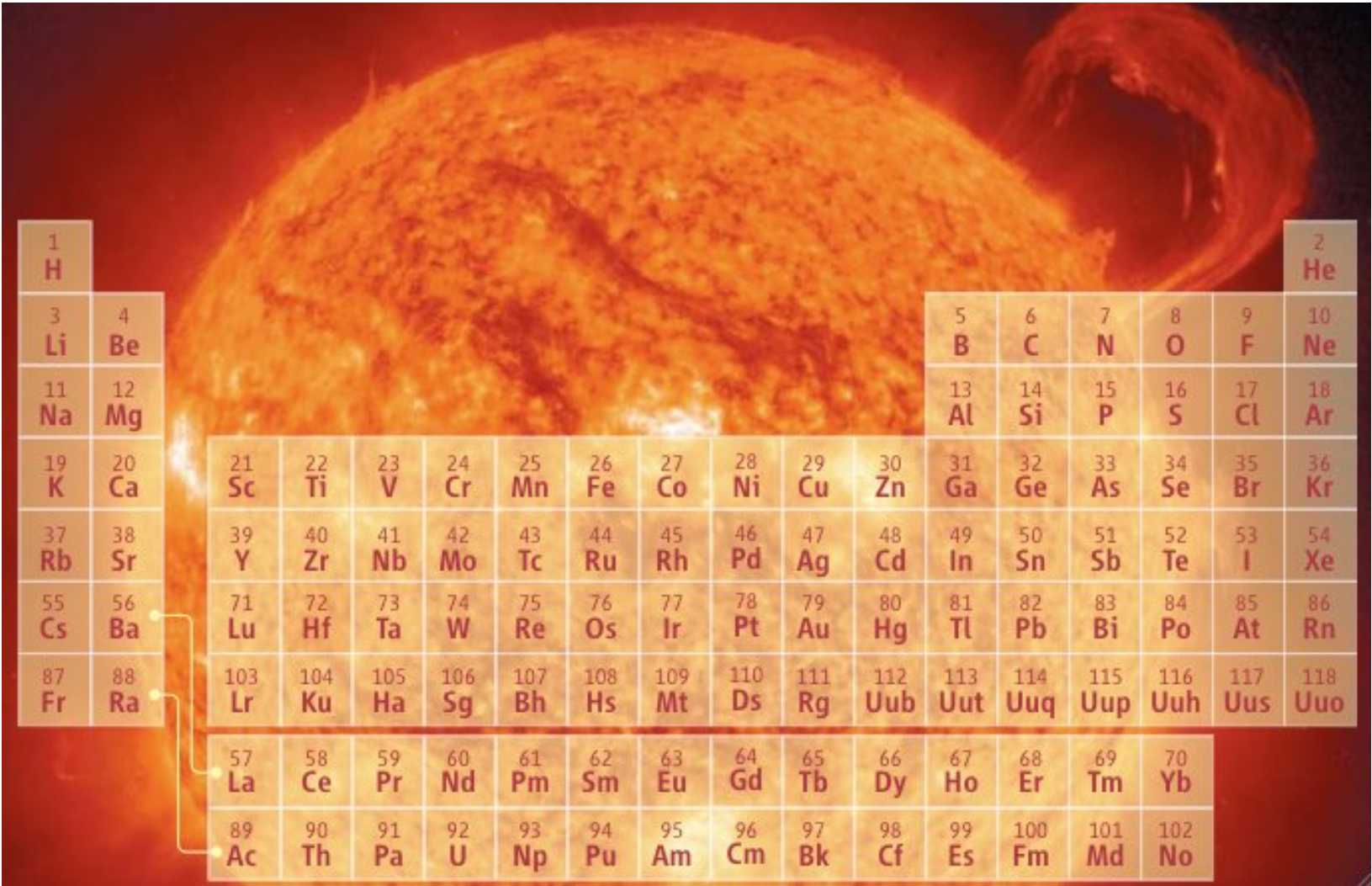
- 1. In thermodynamics, entropy (usual symbol S) is a measure of the number of specific ways in which a thermodynamic system may be arranged, commonly understood as a measure of disorder.
- 2. The tendency of a system that is left to itself to descend into chaos; uncountable.

Note the Periodic Table of the Elements below. It is believed that everything in the cosmos, including humans, is made of the elements listed below. Elements, such as hydrogen and oxygen, are made of atoms; which in turn are made of electrons, protons, and neutrons; which in turn are made of quarks; which in turn are made of the Higgs Boson elemental particle, or particles. For example, the content of the Sun is 71% hydrogen (H) and 27.1% helium (He). In the fantastically hot furnace of the Sun’ core, hy-



drogen and helium (both elements) are fused into heavier elements, such as oxygen(O), carbon(C), nitrogen(N), silicon(Si), magnesium(Mg), neon(Ne), sulfur(S), and iron(Fe). This is an example of how small things become big things in an entropic system, and how simple things become complex things.

When a star, such as our Sun, explodes (supervnova, dies), it gets unimaginably hot and in the process, heavier elements are created, giving birth to asteroids, moons, plan-

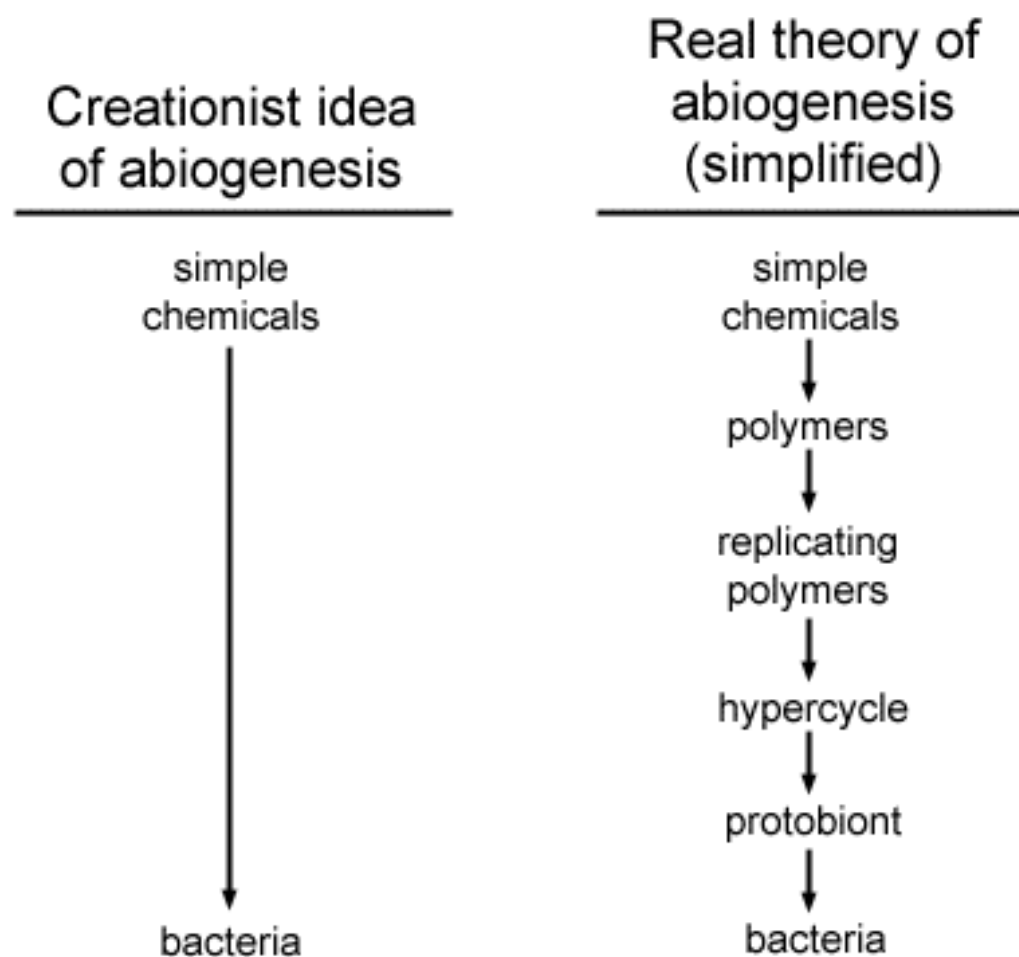


ets, and sometimes new stars. From the inner workings of the Sun, we see a common pattern: given enough time and with the right energy and condition, smaller things become bigger things and simple things become complex things.

However, if everything in the cosmos is made of inorganic elements, how is it possible that biological lifeforms such as plants and humans originated from those lifeless matter? This is the abiogenesis versus biogenesis debate. Creationists believe in biogenesis—that only organic organisms can give life to other organic organisms.

Again, when small things are left alone, with enough time, energy, and entropy working for them, small things become bigger, complex things. Small things amalgamate,

fuse, rearrange, synthesize, and even reproduce. For example, a common compound is water (H₂O), which is made of two elements: hydrogen (H) and oxygen (O).



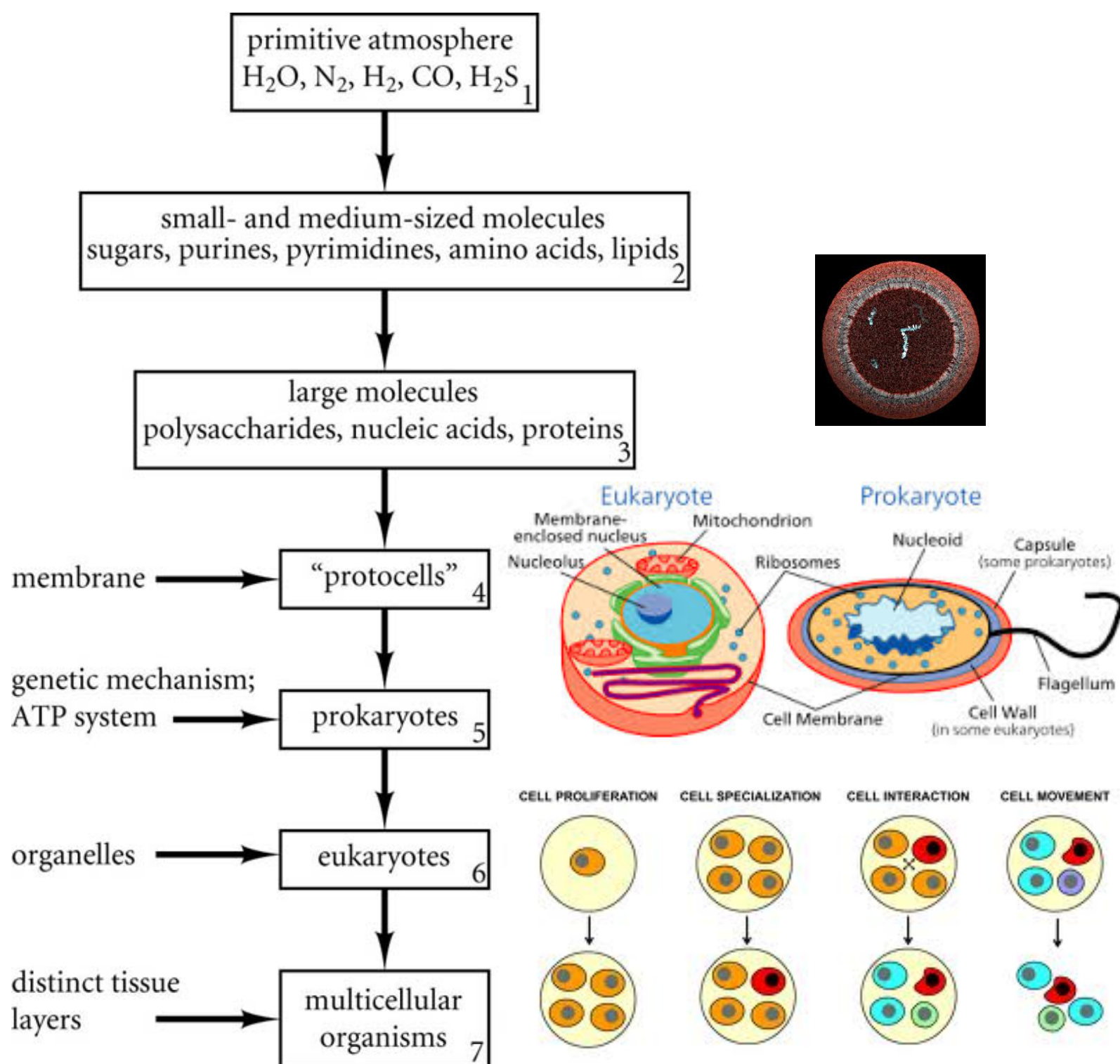
We are infinitesimally small in the infinitely massive cosmos. Our concept of time is in days, weeks, months, and decades—any period longer than eight decades is history to most of us. This is how eighty years looks like: 80 years. Now, imagine 3.55 billion years, or 4.55 billion years, or 13.7 billion years:

- 80 years (average lifespan of many humans)
- 3, 550, 000, 000 years (estimated age of first organic, multicellular organism)
- 4, 550, 000, 000 years (age of Earth)
- 13, 780, 000, 000 years (age of Universe)

We have no personal point of reference or any way to comprehend the staggering expanse of “billions” of years. We only say the billions as a number with a decimal. But behind those billions of years are the processes of entropy and abiogenesis at work. Then add **energy** from radiation, lightning, volcanic eruption, or other energy sources and we have the blueprint for our genetic material.

With enough time, elements amalgamate into simple-inorganic compounds, simple compounds into complex compounds; when energy is added, inorganic compounds turn into organic compounds, organic compounds into molecules, molecules into cells, cells into microbes; microbes and cells into tissues, tissues into organs, organs into multiple organs; into small species, and eventually into humans. It is estimated that the human body has about 100 trillion cells, which varies depending on the mass of the person.

Just like the Sun is comprised of smaller parts, the human body is also comprised of smaller parts. These smaller parts of the Sun and the human body have their beginnings from the Periodical Table of the Elements. And with the blessing of time, entropy, and energy, those elements evolved to form complex, organic matter.



Darwin's Theory Of Evolution—The Premise



Darwin's Theory of Evolution is the widely held notion that all life is related and has descended from a common ancestor: the birds and the bananas, the fishes and the flowers—all related. Darwin's general theory presumes the development of life from non-life and stresses a purely naturalistic (undirected) “descent with modification”. That is, complex creatures evolve from more simplistic ancestors naturally over time. In a nutshell, as random genetic mutations occur within an organism's genetic code, the beneficial mutations are preserved because they aid survival—a process known as “natural selection.” These beneficial mutations are passed on to the next generation. Over time, beneficial mutations accumulate and the result is an entirely different organism (not just a variation of the original, but an entirely different creature). —www.darwins-theory-of-evolution.com

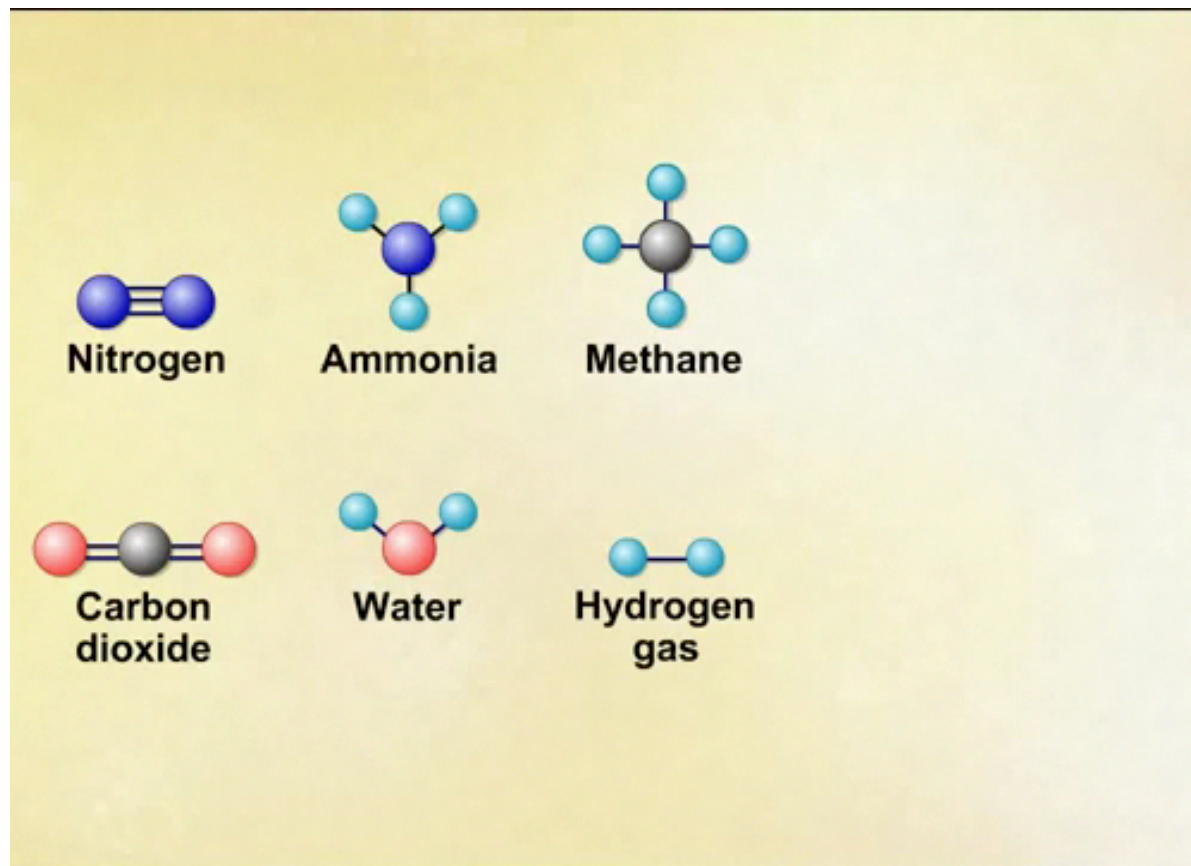
The Missing Link

Creationists point to a perceived flaw in Darwin's theory of evolution: If humans evolved from apes, then why are apes still around? Darwin's theory postulates that humans shared a common ancestor as apes—we did not directly evolve from apes. Therefore, there is no missing link.

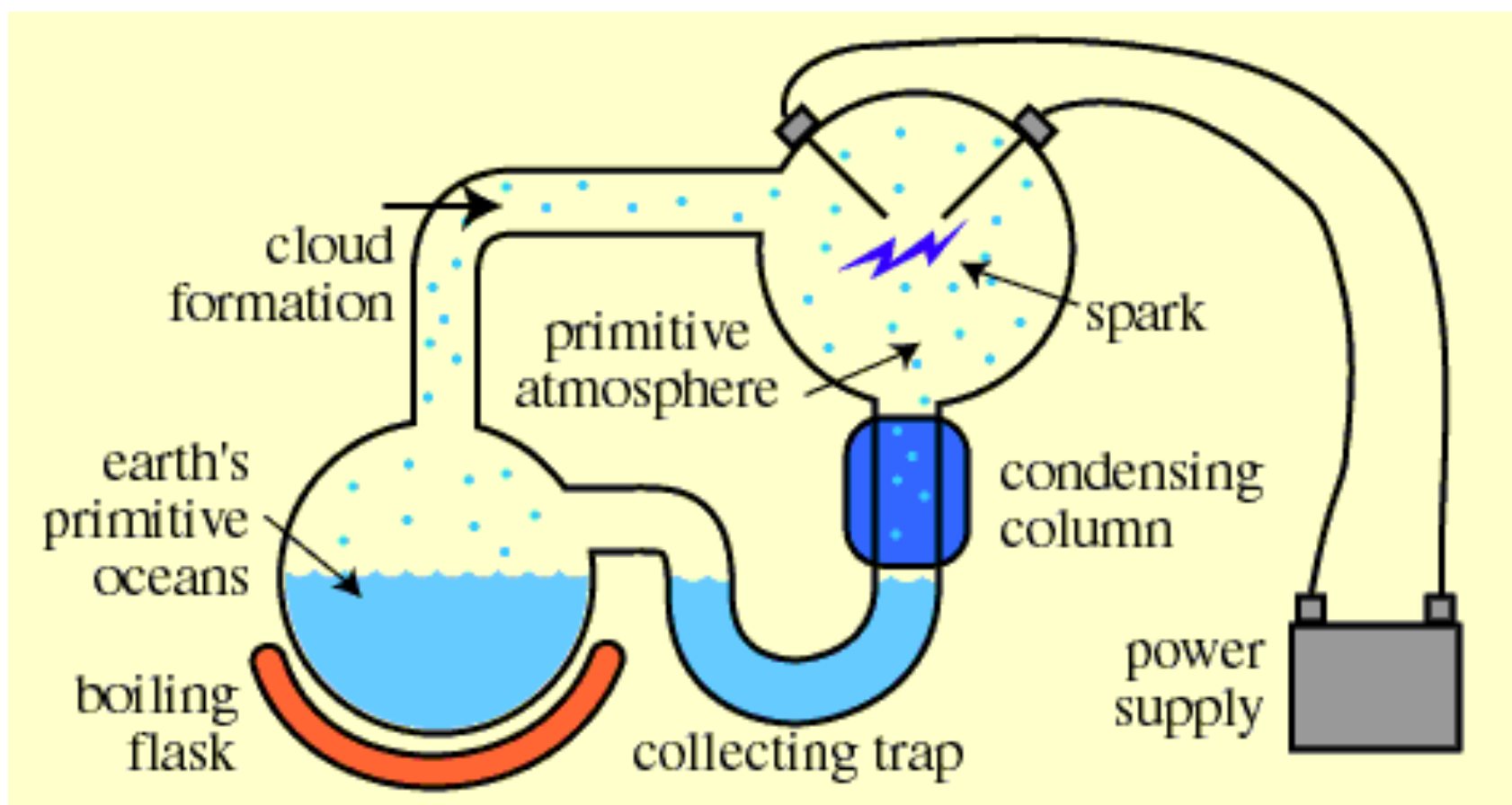
The God Dilemma

We are infinitesimally small in an unimaginably massive cosmos. If there were a god, it would have to be bigger than unimaginably big to have created the Universe and everything in it. If there were a god in this staggering immensity of existence, who is arrogant or delusional enough to think that god would care for her or him? This god, or intelligent designer, would have to be incomprehensibly powerful and its domain so immeasurably vast, that it would not care what we thought of it either way.

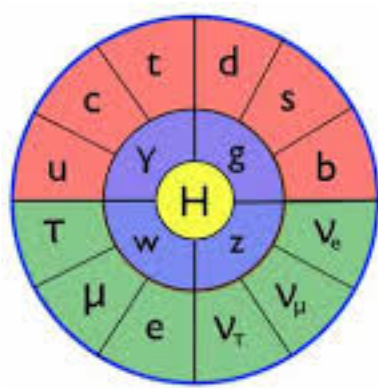
Video: Urey-Miller Experiment, 1953



Turning the inorganic into the organic. Video courtesy of Dr. Prodigious HD Animations.

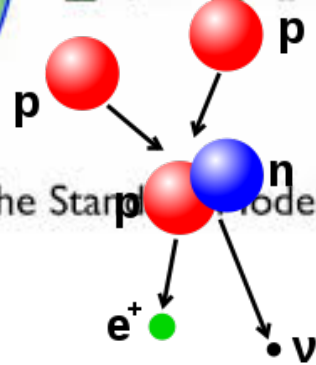




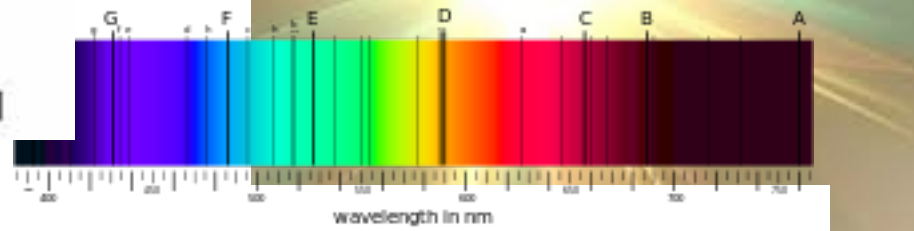
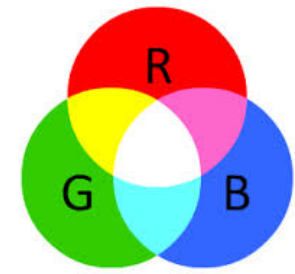


Fermions
Matter
Quarks
Leptons

Bosons
Force Carriers
Gauge bosons
Higgs boson



Particles of the Standard Model



GROUP 1

1

H

hydrogen

[1.007 - 1.009]

2

3

Li

lithium

[6.938 - 6.997]

4

4

Be

beryllium

9.012

11

3

Na

sodium

22.99

12

3

Mg

magnesium

24.31

19

4

K

potassium

39.10

20

4

Ca

calcium

40.08

21

5

Sc

scandium

44.96

22

5

Ti

titanium

47.87

23

5

V

vanadium

50.94

24

5

Cr

chromium

52.00

25

5

Mn

manganese

54.94

26

5

Fe

iron

55.85

27

5

Co

cobalt

58.93

28

5

Ni

nickel

58.69

29

5

Cu

copper

63.55

30

5

Zn

zinc

65.38

31

6

Ga

gallium

69.72

32

6

Ge

germanium

72.63

33

6

As

arsenic

74.92

34

6

Se

selenium

78.96

35

6

Br

bromine

79.90

36

6

Kr

krypton

83.80

37

5

Rb

rubidium

85.47

38

5

Sr

strontium

87.62

39

5

Y

yttrium

88.91

40

5

Zr

zirconium

91.22

41

5

Nb

niobium

92.91

42

5

Mo

molybdenum

95.94

43

5

Tc

technetium

(98)

44

5

Ru

ruthenium

101.1

45

5

Rh

rhodium

102.9

46

5

Pd

palladium

106.4

47

5

Ag

silver

107.9

48

5

Cd

cadmium

112.4

49

6

In

indium

114.8

50

6

Sn

tin

118.7

51

6

Sb

antimony

121.8

52

6

Te

tellurium

127.6

53

6

I

iodine

126.9

54

6

Xe

xenon

131.3

55

6

Cs

cesium

132.9

56

6

Ba

barium

137.3

57-71

6

lanthanoids

72

6

Hf

hafnium

178.5

73

6

Ta

tantalum

180.9

74

6

W

tungsten

183.8

75

6

Re

rhenium

186.2

76

6

Os

osmium

190.2

77

6

Ir

iridium

192.2

78

6

Pt

platinum

195.1

79

6

Au

gold

197.0

80

6

Hg

mercury

200.6

81

6

Tl

thallium

[204.3 - 204.4]

82

6

Pb

lead

207.2

83

6

Bi

bismuth

208.9

84

6

Po

polonium

(209)

85

6

At

astatine

(210)

86

6

Rn

radon

(222)

87

7

Fr

francium

(223)

88

7

Ra

radium

(226)

89-103

7

actinoids

104

7

Rf

rutherfordium

(261)

105

7

Db

dubnium

(262)

106

7

Sg

seaborgium

(266)

107

7

Bh

bohrium

(264)

108

7

Hs

hassium

(277)

109

7

Mt

meitnerium

(268)

110

7

Ds

darmstadtium

(271)

111

7

Rg

roentgenium

(272)

112

7

Cn

copernicium

(285)

113

7

Uut

ununtrium

(284)

114

7

Uuq

ununquadium

(289)

115

7

Uup

ununpentium

(288)

116

7

Uuh

ununhexium

(292)

117

7

Uus

ununseptium

(294)

118

7

Uuo

ununoctium

(294)

GROUP 18

2

He

helium

4.003

10

2

Ne

neon

20.18

18

3

Ar

argon

39.95

36

4

Kr

krypton

83.80

54

5

Xe

xenon

131.3

86

6

Rn

radon

(222)

atomic number

white text = gas state at 0 °C

chemical symbol

chemical name

standard atomic weight

(lowest - upper) bounds

(lowest no stable isotopes)

26

Fe

iron

55.85

Element Categories

actinoids

alkali metals

alkaline metals

other metals

transition metals

lanthanoids

metalloids

nonmetals

halogens

noble gases

unknown elements

Electron Configuration Blocks

s

d

p

f

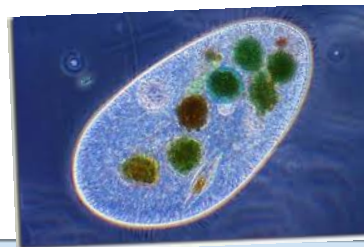
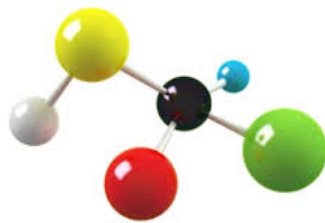
Natural Occurrence

☐ primordial

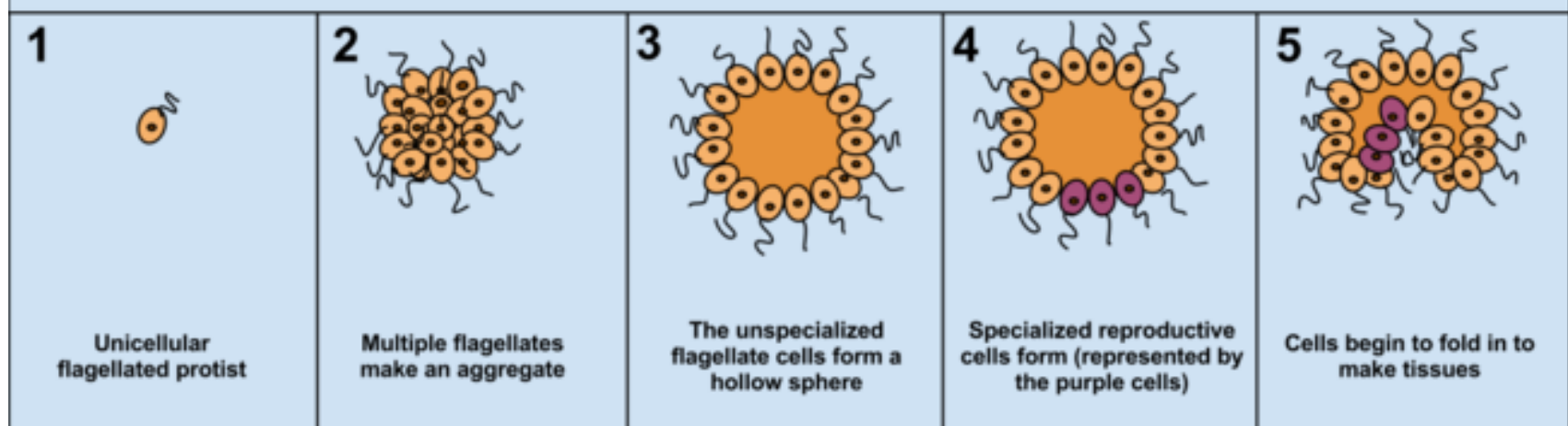
☐ from decay

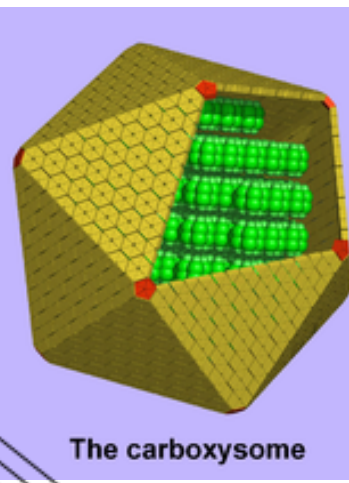
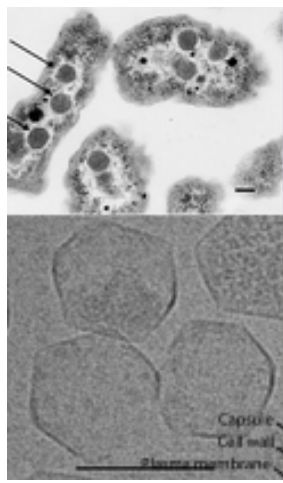
☐ synthetic

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 57 La lanthanum 138.9 | 58 Ce cerium 140.1 | 59 Pr praseodymium 140.9 | 60 Nd neodymium 144.2 | 61 Pm promethium (145) | 62 Sm samarium 150.4 | 63 Eu europium 152.0 | 64 Gd gadolinium 157.3 | 65 Tb terbium 158.9 | 66 Dy dysprosium 162.5 | 67 Ho holmium 164.9 | 68 Er erbium 167.3 | 69 Tm thulium 168.9 | 70 Yb ytterbium 173.1 | 71 Lu lutetium 175.0 |
| 89 Ac actinium (227) | 90 Th thorium 232.0 | 91 Pa protactinium 231.0 | 92 U uranium 238.0 | 93 Np neptunium (237) | 94 Pu plutonium (244) | 95 Am americium (243) | 96 Cm curium (247) | 97 Bk berkelium (247) | 98 Cf californium (251) | 99 Es einsteinium (252) | 100 Fm fermium (257) | 101 Md mendelevium (258) | 102 No nobelium (259) | 103 Lr lawrencium (262) |



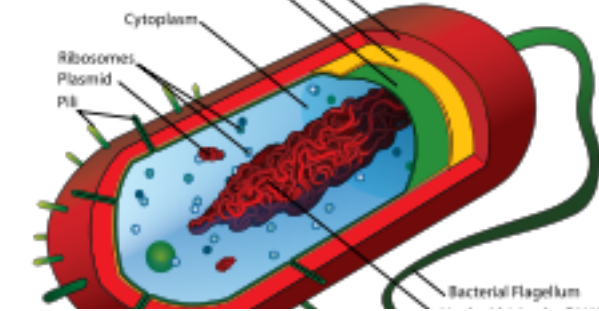
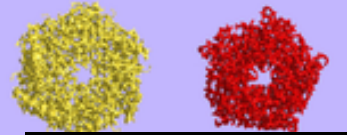
Colonial Flagellate Hypothesis



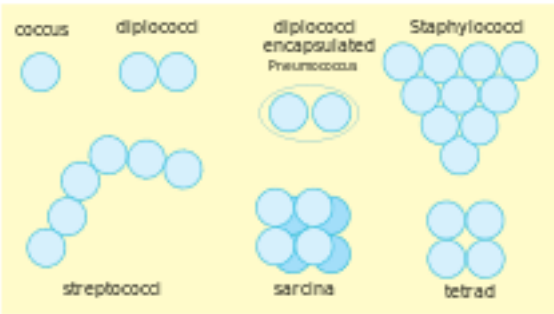


Enzymes and shell proteins

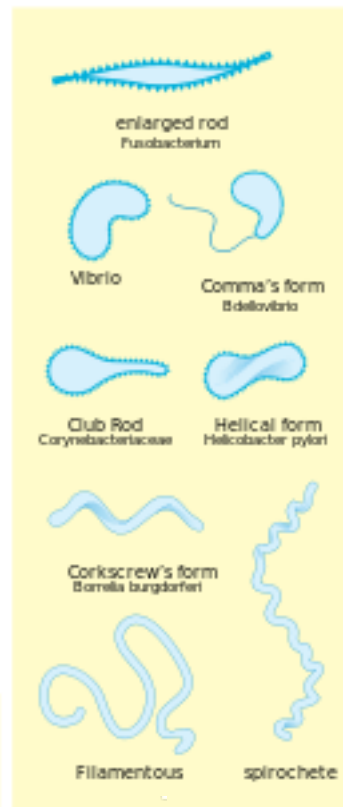
RuBisCO



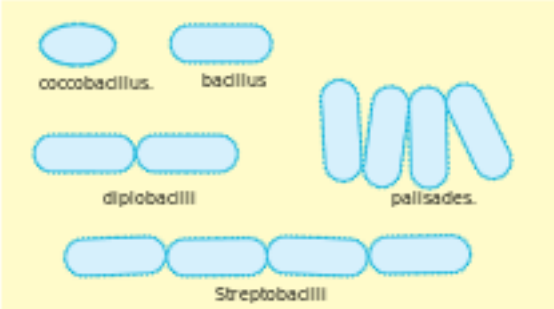
Cocci



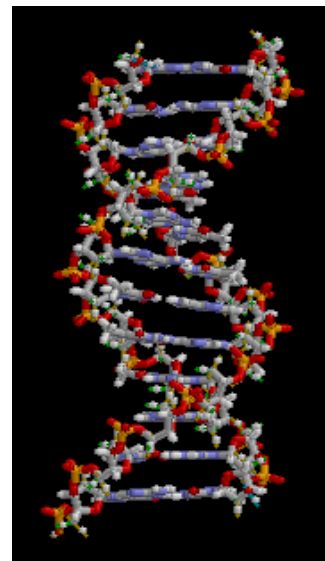
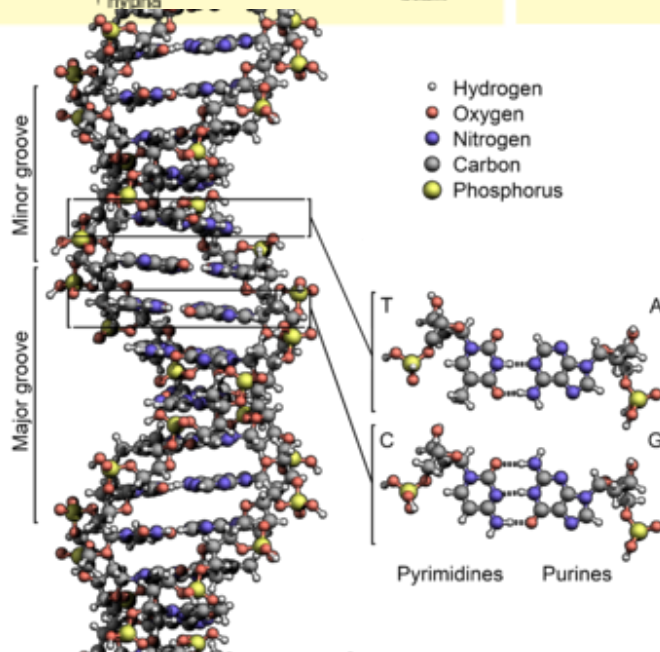
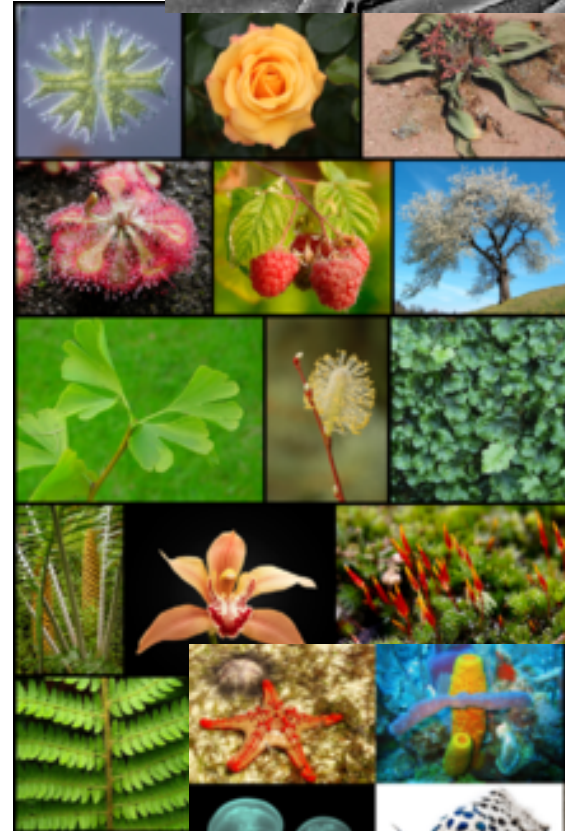
Others



Bacilli



Budding and appendaged bacteria





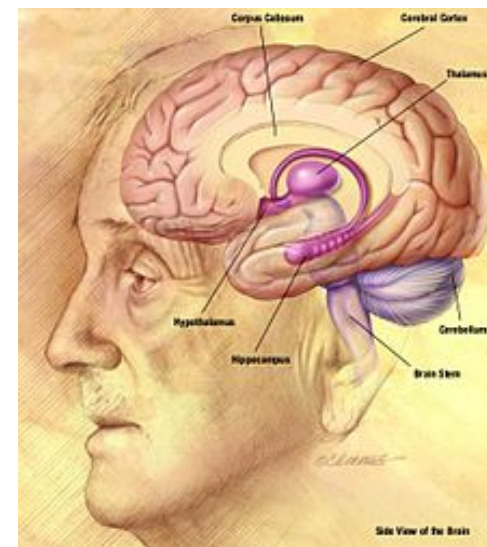
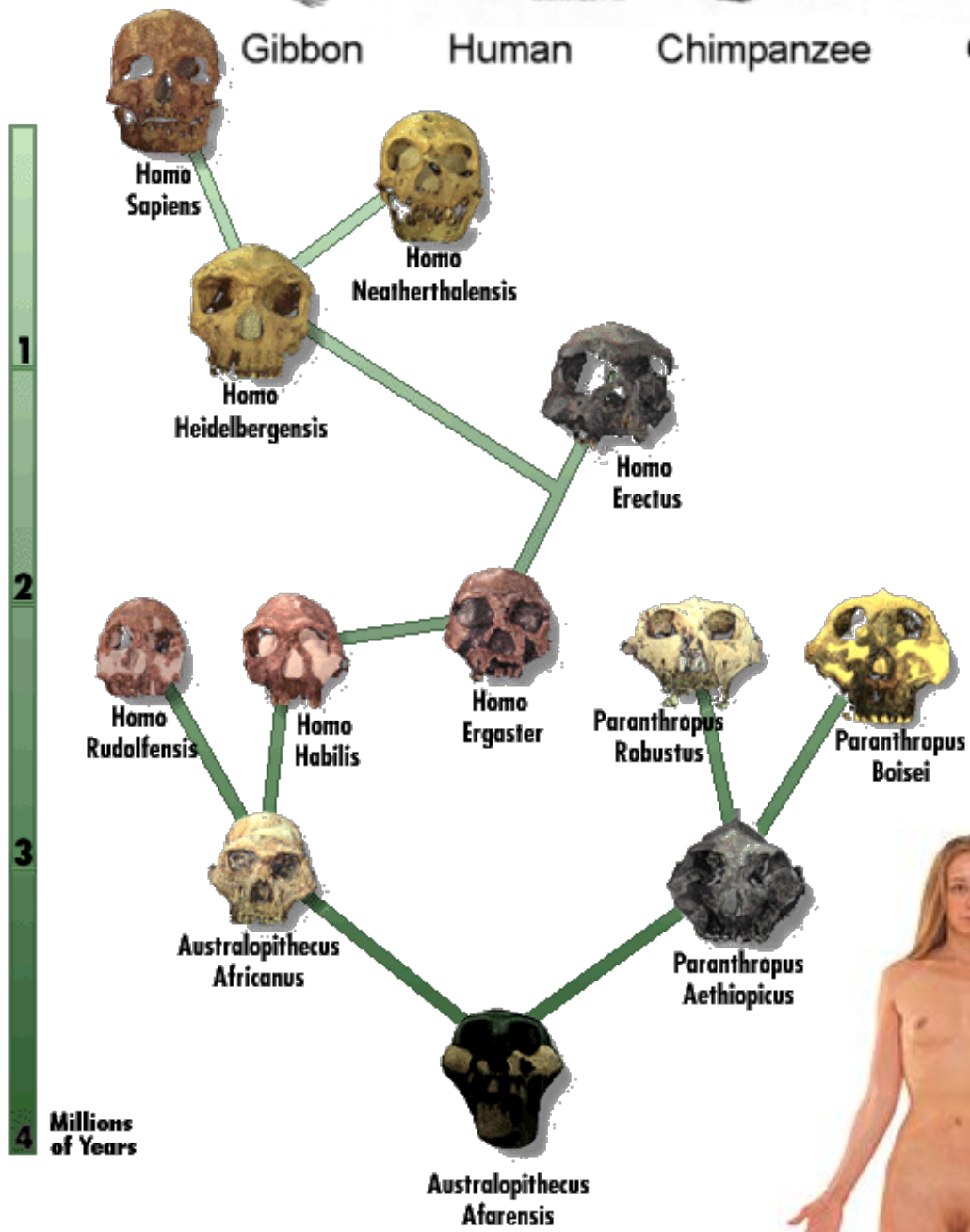
Gibbon

Human

Chimpanzee

Gorilla

Orangutan



THE PALE BLUE DOT

Our planet is a lonely speck in the great
enveloping cosmic dark...

Consider again that dot.

That's here.

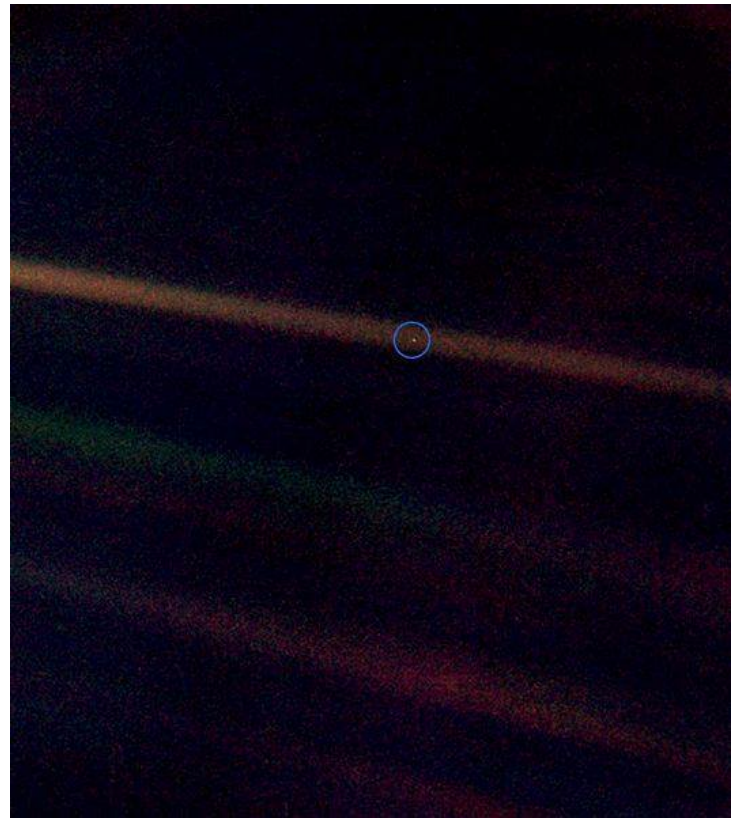
That's home.

That's us.

On it everyone you love,
everyone you know,
everyone you ever heard of,
every human being who ever was,
lived out their lives.

The aggregate of our joy and suffering,
thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines,
every hunter and forager,
every hero and coward,
every creator and destroyer of civilization,
every king and peasant,
every young couple in love,
every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer,
every teacher of morals,
every corrupt politician,
every "superstar,"
every "supreme leader,"
every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there—

on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.



Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that in glory and triumph they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot.

Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner.

How frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds.

Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the universe, are challenged by this point of pale light.

Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark.

In our obscurity—in all this vastness—there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.

The Earth is the only world known, so far, to harbor life. There is nowhere else, at least in the near future, to which our species could migrate. Visit, yes. Settle, not yet. Like it or not, for the moment,

the Earth is where we make our stand.



Carl Sagan

HUMANITY

NATURALOPY

CELEBRATING HUMANITY

Nature favours diversity to ensure the propagation of her creations; Humanity would be wise to also favour diversity when adopting knowledge. Although diverse and in silos, the foundation for our moral guidelines and belief system have been formulated by Humans before us and those still with us. There is no need to attribute to the gods what Humanity has accomplished. The Sumerians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, Mayans, and other great civilizations of the past once believed in gods. However, their faith did not save their civilizations.

If we are to co-exist, live peacefully, and advance together as a species, we need to abandon our gods, because fables and science are incompatible.

Since time immemorial, our ancestors have conjured ingenious myths and fables to explain the six primary metaphysical questions of existence (the BIG questions):

- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

Independently, for millennia, in different continents of the world, small groups of men congregated and concluded that humans could not adequately answer these existential

questions. Therefore, due to our ancestors's limited knowledge of the physical world at the time, they used their brilliant imagination. The answers to these pressing questions were deferred to a higher power, an omnipotent figure or a group of them—god or gods. Within each region of the world, ideas were borrowed and passed down from one religion to another, and as a result of empire building, several religions crossed continents and became pervasive in daily life.

As we are still witnessing, due to perpetual conflict, religion is extremely intrusive and problematic on a global scale. The Jews are still fighting Muslims in Israel-Palestine; Jews and Christians are often at loggerheads; Muslim sects are fighting each other throughout the Middle East; Christians are occupying Muslim countries; and Muslims are persecuting Christians in certain parts of the Middle East. It's a quagmire of hate, and this pattern of hate continues despite the fact that Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are all Abrahamic religions—they share the same root. Each one espouses peace as a central tenet of its religion, but we know it is very different in practice.

The inconsistencies, contradictions, and absurdities of every major religion are so glaring and abundant that it would take an encyclopedia to distill, and even chaff.

Three Religions, One Root, Dozens of Denominations, Countless Interpretations...In Perpetual conflict

First, take the Christians. The Christians believe in the Old Testament and the New Testament bibles, but do not believe in the Torah (Jewish holy book) or Quran (Muslim holy book). Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God sent by god himself to deliver men from their sins. In the Holy Trinity (conceptualized by Theophilus of Antioch, 412 AD.), Christians believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Holy Spirit, and God himself—a 3 for 1 special. The Christian Holy Bible has been translated and re-interpreted several dozen times; therefore, no one knows how different it really is from the original text, if one did exist.

The Christians have been waiting for over 2,000 years for the second coming of their prophet, Jesus Christ.

500 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.

1000 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.

1500 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.

2000 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.

The Kingdom of Heaven is never upon us, for one strange reason or another.

Second, take the Jews. The Jews believe in the Old Testament and the Torah (Talmud), but not the New Testament nor the Quran nor Jesus Christ. The Jews believe Jesus Christ and Muhammad were false prophets. The Jews also believe that they are the Chosen People of god and have been waiting over 5,000 years for their Messiah to appear on Earth. For reasons not generally agreed upon, the Jews have been the most persecuted people in all of Humanity.

Third, take the Muslims. The Muslims believe in every Abrahamic holy book: Old Testament, New Testament (Holy Bible), Torah, and especially Islam's Quran. They also believe in all the Abrahamic prophets and messengers, such as Noah, Moses, Daniel, Elijah, Jesus Christ, and particularly Muhammad. Muslims believe that Muhammed was a prophet and a Messenger of God. Essentially, the Islamic religion is based on the account of one man who claimed he had received the words and will of god through the angel Gabriel. This is religious nuttery at its finest.

The religious madness continues when all the sects (movements, denominations) of each major religion are taken into consideration. The confusion and obfuscation are endless since each group has subgroups (branches) with their own interpretation of the "holy" scriptures. As examples:

Christianity: Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Anglican, Mormon, Jehovah's Witness, Protestant, and so on.

Judaism: Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructional, Hasidism, Kabbalah, and so on.

Islam: Ahmadiyya, Ibadi, Shia, Sufism, Sunni, Wahhabi, Nation of Islam, and so on.

If the word of god is final, then why is it so different? And why are there so many of them? And why do they utterly contradict each other? If we just skim the surface of religion, it would be reasonable to conclude that religion was created like TV channels:

at some point a group felt their interests were not being represented and decided to create a new channel (branch, denomination, sect, group). In this new channel, they concocted whatever they needed in order to attract and appease followers. As long as the sheep watched one channel, everything made sense, and considered divine and brilliant. However, as soon as the followers switched channels (self-education), nothing made sense anymore. There were inconsistencies, absurdities, and bull manure—piles and piles of it. Is it any wonder that the phrase “holy shit” is a cultural lexicon? However, we should applaud our ancestors for having wove brilliantly imaginative stories to explain the nature of existence.

Despite advances in communication, technology, education, and science, the moral guidelines and belief systems of most humans are still grounded in myths and fables. Like children reading fairy tale stories, these religious adherents believe *their* magical wizard exists. They cling to the absurd notion that their magical wizard has chosen them as its favourite children, to the exclusion of others—religion divides, Humanity unites. For these reasons, much of the strife and suffering in the world can be attributed to the divisive nature of religion.

Atavistic: characterized by reversion to something ancient or ancestral;
of a throwback or exhibiting primitivism.

Those who seek comfort in religion have an atavistic worldview—they hold onto the past because the present and future may be unpleasant for them, or they refuse to face the present and future. They refuse to let go and become objective in their worldview.

Religion: When we don't understand how the world works, make it up.

A sore point among the scientific community is that Abrahamic religions still teach their followers that the Universe and Earth were created 6,000 - 10,000 years ago by god, despite overwhelming scientific evidence against the assertion. Science has shown, using radiometric dating, geological stratigraphy, and helioseismic dating, that the Earth is roughly 4.55 billion years old. However, the generally accepted number among Christians is 6,000, and that figure was derived from counting successive generations since Adam and Eve in the Old Testament.

Miseducation is more dangerous than uneducation.

The Six Existential Questions of Life

There is ample, if not conclusive, evidence to support the theory of abiogenesis. In 1953, scientists Stanley Miller and Howard Urey demonstrated the process in which inorganic molecules mutated to complex organic molecules (amino acids, carbohydrates, nucleic acids) roughly 3.5 billion years ago, paving the way for biological life on Earth.

In 1956, using uranium-lead dating and lead-lead dating methods, geochemist Clair Patterson calculated that the Earth was roughly 4.55 billion years old. Even today, Dr. Patterson's estimate is considered accurate within 20-70 million years.

Recently, scientists have re-enacted the creation of our Universe, the Big Bang, in laboratories, particle accelerators, and computer simulations. The data from scientists working independently around the world places our Universe at roughly 13.7 billion years old. We also know from Nagasaki and Hiroshima that when an atom, invisible to the eyes, is split, it releases enough energy to start a chain reaction powerful enough to destroy a city. From these World War II events and our knowledge that mass and energy are interchangeable, we know that something infinitesimally small has the potential to become massively big under the right conditions—this is the awesome power of Nature.

The truth and answers to life are found in science and education, not in religion. Religion hampers our perspective and understanding of the world. Religion is miseducation. A devout religious person loses precious time; first by miseducation, then by re-education.

Let us ponder the primary existential questions of life, without involving religion.

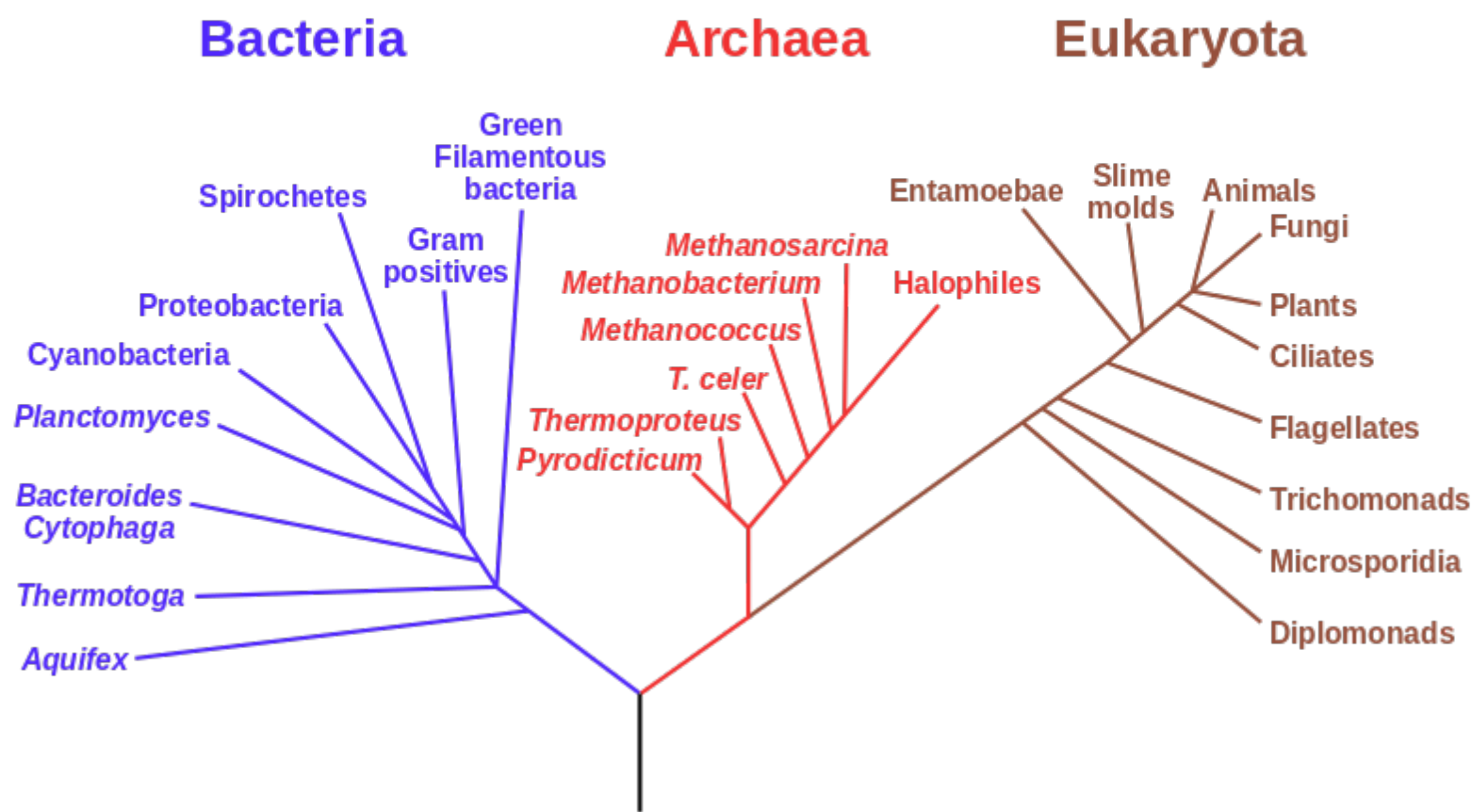
- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

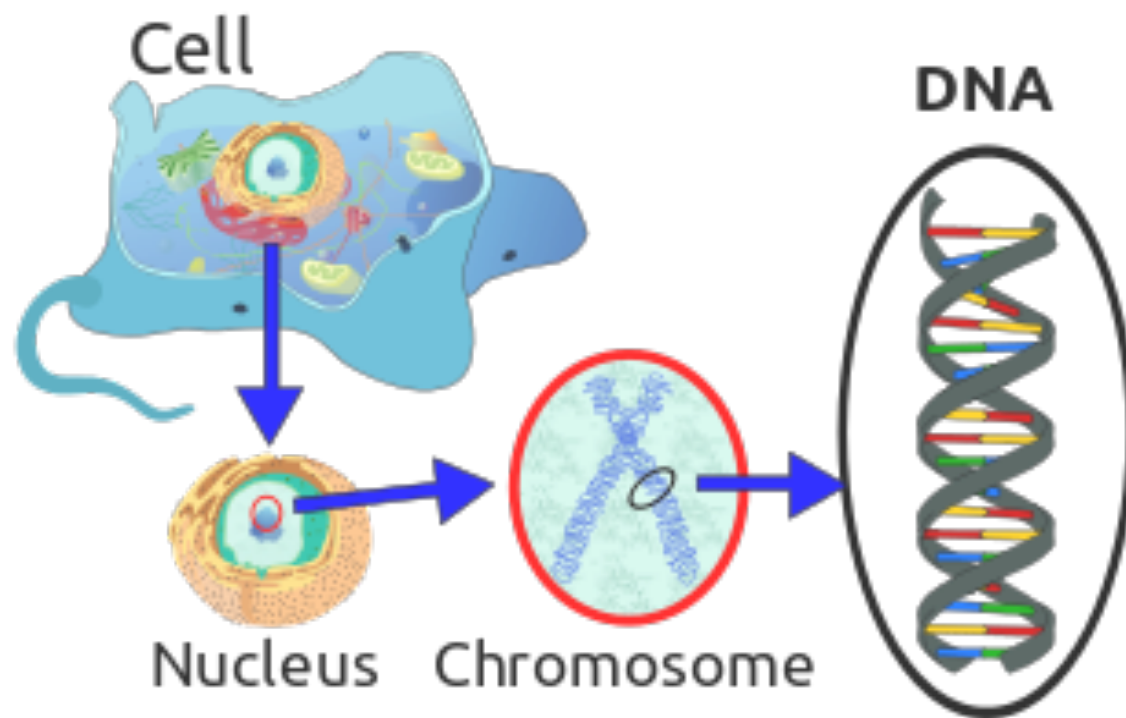
1. Where Did We Come From?

We are all powerful and extraordinary, for we were birthed by the stars. Nature created us through roughly 4.55 billion years of experimentation: from atoms; to chemical elements; to inorganic molecules; to complex-organic molecules; to single-celled organisms; to multicellular organisms of microbes and bacteria; to invertebrates, amphibians, fishes, reptiles, birds, and mammals; then the grand prize of evolution: Homo Sapiens, a thinking and reasoning animal atop the food chain, capable of the greatest vices and virtues.

We are constructed of the same elements as those in the stars: hydrogen, helium, oxygen, carbon, nitrogen, silicon, magnesium, neon, iron, and sulfur. The differences between the elements in our body and those in the Sun are the quantity, ratio, arrangement, and complexity—the fusion of the Sun’s lighter elements created heavier elements, then complex molecules in our body. This fact can be verified with electron microscopes, chemical analysis of our cells, spectral analysis, and carbon dating. We share a common ancestor with every living thing on this planet—the spiritualists knew this without requiring scientific evidence when they stated that “everything is connected to everything else.”

Phylogenetic Tree of Life





The average human body is comprised of roughly 100 trillion cells, each evolved over 3.5 billion years to perform a special function in a specific organ. Contrary to popular belief, humans did not evolve from apes—we share a common ancestor with them, just like we share a common ancestry with a butterfly, tree, lion, flower, and every organism on this Earth. Therefore, there is no “missing link” in Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution.

Whether biological life began on Earth in the ashes of underwater volcanoes or bacteria from asteroids (meteors) or on the surface of oceans, it began very small as microbes, then amalgamated and evolved from there to bigger organisms.



2. What Is Our Purpose In Life?

At the universal level, there is a shared baseline for the purpose of life: eat well, sleep well, mingle well, work well, and enjoy life. Every single study on happiness has shown that our connection to our community is one of the most— many times the most—important factor in how happy we are. Our contribution to our community and connection to Nature form the foundation of happiness and purpose.

At the individual level, the purpose of life is different from person to person. That is, the meaning of life varies depending on the person. It has been said that when we find our passion, we find our purpose. However, history has shown that the most purposeful and remembered lives are those who served Humanity—those who lit the path with glowing lights to show others the way. Their spirits are in this book.

The people who have found their purpose in life share some traits: they went through periods of trial and error before finally deciding what they were good at; they had failed before they succeeded; they enjoy what they do; they feel no need to defend what they do; they view what they do as a passion, not as work or a career; they feel what they do makes a difference in the lives of others; and they give back to their community.

If each and every day of our life, we do something productive that fills our waking hours, that is purpose enough. It will leave the world a better place than we found it.

As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, “The purpose of life is not to find yourself, but to *create* yourself.”

The meaning and purpose of life are covered more in depth in Precept 7: Purpose.

3. Why Do Bad Things Happen To Us?

Bad things happen to us for the same reason good things happen to us: the choices we make. The choices we make in life are cumulative and eventually end in consequence. When we made bad decisions, we were either ignorant of the repercussion or had a subconscious desire for the outcome. Summarily, good or bad things happen according to karma—the law of cause and effect. What goes around, comes around.

Of course there are exceptions to this karmic balance; two notable exceptions are natural disasters and children. When children, vulnerable and impressionable, are inflicted with suffering or evil, it is because they are dependent on their parents or caretakers, thus the child's karma is inherited. Or in reverse, parents are punished through the suffering of their children. Just like children who benefit from their parents's skillful deeds, so do children suffer from their parents's unskillful deeds. Our deeds affect us and those we care about. Only when children become emotionally independent and self-sufficient are they responsible for their own karma.

We reap what we sow.

4. Is There A God?

No.

At least not the ones that have been fabricated by humans. Gods have come and gone throughout history, just like the fideist civilizations that worshipped them.

Fideism: The doctrine that religion is the basis of all knowledge; that faith is independent of reason.

Religion has nothing to do with morality and science. We can have morality without religion; we can attain spirituality without priests, rabbis, or imams. We can explain and even predict natural phenomena without the aid of an intelligent designer. We understand how the world works without religious textbooks. We have discovered our origin without faith. We can accurately describe how the cosmos works without a god in it.

If a person does not know right from wrong, then they lack morality. They do not lack religion.

If a person does not understand how the world works, then they lack self-education. They do not lack religion. They have not been enlightened.

If we study history, we know that the Sumerians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, East Indians, Mayans, and every small and large civilization in-between believed in gods at one time or another. They did this for hundreds and even thousands of years. However, gods were created by our ancestors in an attempt to answer existential questions and explain natural phenomena.

- What caused lightening and thunder? God was angry.
- Was a comet a good omen or bad omen? Ask the fortune teller.
- What did a earthquake foretell? The end of the world.
- Why did it rain? Some god in the sky was sad and crying.
- Why did the seasons change? The harvest goddess's daughter was kidnapped and the daughter had to spend six months in hell, this made the goddess sad and

gloomy, therefore winter; when her daughter was returned for six months, the goddess was in a sunny disposition, therefore summer.

- What did the planets, stars, and other celestial bodies represent? Gods and goddesses.

Religion begins where knowledge ends.

Now, let's scrutinize religion from a modern perspective.

- Did Moses really talk to a burning bush on a mountaintop that was supposedly god?
- Did Noah really save civilization and all the animals on his big boat (arc)?
- Was Jesus really the child of a virgin mother; and he walked on water, and arose from the dead?
- Did Muhammad really receive the will of god through an angel?

Unfortunately, there are billions of people who still believe religious nonsense. They have fought, still do fight, and will fight each other to the death for their outdated religious beliefs. Witness the Christian Crusade, the Muslim Jihad, and the Jewish Protocols of the Elders of Zion (if it's to be believed as authentic). Three religions with supposedly one god, and in practice they can't even agree on the basic principles of that one god, hence the perpetual conflicts. The god question is, "Whose god?"

We are the most advanced civilization that Earth has ever harbored. Despite this fact, there are hundreds of millions of people who lack the fundamental principles of basic science, thus the popularity of religion. In a 2014 survey by the U.S. National Science Foundation, 26% of Americans thought the Sun revolved around the Earth; similarly, 34% of Europeans thought the same thing. In addition, 52% of Americans were unaware that humans evolved from earlier species of animals. The fact that the Earth revolves around the Sun was settled by Nicolaus Copernicus in the 16th century, but was suppressed by the Catholic Church. Similarly, the theory of evolution by Charles Darwin is being perverted and suppressed to this very day by devout Christians, Jews, and Muslims. Now, if the U.S. and Europe are considered First World, how much hope of enlightenment is there in Developing and Third World countries that are steeped in religion?

A Brief History of Religion

A religion becomes dominant when it is adopted by the elite and ruler. It's a top-down adoption and expansion pattern, and those who blindly follow are considered "sheep" by the enlightened. This herd mentality, blind faith, follow-the-leader, peer pressure, mob rule, or by any other name is true of the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faiths.

First, examine Christianity, which was an illegal and persecuted cult for centuries throughout the Roman Empire. However, this cult became fashionable when Roman Emperor Constantine I adopted it as his official religion and instituted it in the First Council of Nicaea in 325 AD. From there, Christianity "borrowed" most ideas for Jesus Christ's divinity from the Pagans and Egyptians: birth from a virgin mother, rise after three days of death, Christmas for Winter Solstice, the son of god, the bringer of light, and so on. The Christian faith is a mashup of other faiths. Not surprisingly, there are now scholars who doubt if Jesus Christ had existed at all. If these scholars are right, then Jesus Christ was a fictional character. If Jesus did exist, he might have been a spiritual teacher or philosopher who was lionized and exaggerated by the Creed of Nicaea and subsequent ecumenical councils of Nicaea.

We know from history that Jesus Christ's godly features were fabricated to make him more appealing to the commoners. In truth, Jesus Christ was a product manufactured by the apostles of Nicaea, the predecessors to the priests of the Roman Catholic Church. As we note from history, Jesus was not considered divine until three hundred years after his supposed birth, when it was convenient for the ruling authority. Since the First Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, and largely thanks to the largesse of Emperor Constantine I, Christianity had spread with the Roman Empire. However, the Roman Empire has long since collapsed, but the Holy Roman Empire is alive and well in the Roman Catholic Church—the Pope has replaced the Emperor. The largest landowner in the world today is the Roman Catholic Church (the Vatican). There is much more to Christianity than religion.

Second, examine Judaism. It is believed that most Jews today are not descendants of the original Semites of the Middle East, but they are converts of European and Turkic heritage (Khazarian Empire theory, 618 - 1048 AD). Nowadays, to label someone a Jew is ambiguous. The Jews could be identified as a race who shared a common ancestry in Judea (Palestine), as the Romans called it. Or the Jews could be identified as a religious group who have adopted Judaism. Since 250 AD, the Jews have been ex-

pelled about 109 times from territories and nations in which they had inhabited—the two most prominent are the Spanish Inquisition (1492) and the World War II Holocaust (1939 - 1944). The Jews have also been victims of numerous edicts and pogroms. Whether they were considered subversive, as scapegoats, or just generally disliked for their belief that they were the Chosen People of God, the Jews as a group have suffered much throughout history. As religious hogwash goes, if god loved the Jews so much that he made them the Chosen People, he would have made more of them, like the 1.1 billion East Indians or the 1.3 billion Chinese. And god certainly would not have created the Israelites to be dependent on the generosity of American taxpayers.

Third, examine Islam, which is the youngest of the three major religions today. Islam came about when Muhammad (Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim, 570 - 632 AD) had a series of “divine” revelations. He claimed that the angel Gabriel had revealed to him the words of god. These revelations were recorded in what is now the Muslim holy book, the Quran. When the sheiks and kings of many Arabian tribes adopted Muhammad’s teachings, their followers became Muslim adherents. The word “Muslim” means he who submits to god, or the will of god. In whole, the Muslim faith is based entirely on the account of one man, a businessman no less, who claimed an angel had spoken to him, and that this angel had revealed to him the will of god. If anyone made that claim today they would be locked up in an psychiatric ward and the key thrown away.

Destructive Muslim concepts such as infidels, Sharia Laws, fatwa, and jihad are familiar to non-Muslims. The Quran appears to be a book of fiction written by a man similar to the one who founded Scientology, Ron L. Hubbard. Humanity could face another Dark Age if Islam is spread unchecked. Islam is a backward religion, nothing in it agrees with reason, science, and especially basic human rights.

The three major religions have their root in the Middle East. Today, the region of the Earth that is constantly at war is the Middle East—people with the same ancestry killing each other because they belong to different sects or branches of the same religion. That is Karma on display. If left unrestrained, these religious numbskulls will continue to kill each other to establish nations governed by religious laws (read: theocratic societies, outdated, backward, irrational, oppressive, tyrannical).

Religion was, and is still, used to control people, not enlighten them; religion is the dumbing down of Humanity's potential, because religion is arbitrary and subjective. It is science that enlightens and reason that establishes the principles of morality. If we are to seriously enquire about god, we need to ask questions that we have no answers to.

- Who created god?
- Does god exist in the form of mass, energy, or both?
- Why has the voice or image of god never been heard or seen by a group of people? It's always unverifiable stories from a lone nut in the wilderness.

We've mapped the Earth, the solar system, part of the Milky Way galaxy, and have begun creating a 3-dimensional map of the Universe—where does god reside? If the answer is “everywhere”, that is Nature. Nature exists everywhere.

Religious fanatics like to challenge the agnostic or atheist with, “If you don't believe in god, then what do you believe in?”

A good place to start would be to believe in universal knowledge, collective wisdom, and spirituality. Humanity. Nature. Science.

If you need to believe in someone, believe in yourself.

5. Are We Alone In The Universe?

Most unlikely. There are an estimated 100-400 billion stars in a galaxy and 100 billion galaxies in the Universe, and these estimates keep increasing as new discoveries are made. Mathematically, according to the theory of chaos and the Frank Drake equation, there are millions of lifeforms in the Universe and probably thousands with our intellectual capacity, and some even exceeding our intellectual capacity. The primordial soup of elements that kickstarted life on Earth is a mathematical reality in millions of other solar systems in the cosmos.

Abiogenesis: The original evolution of life or living organisms from inorganic or inanimate substances.

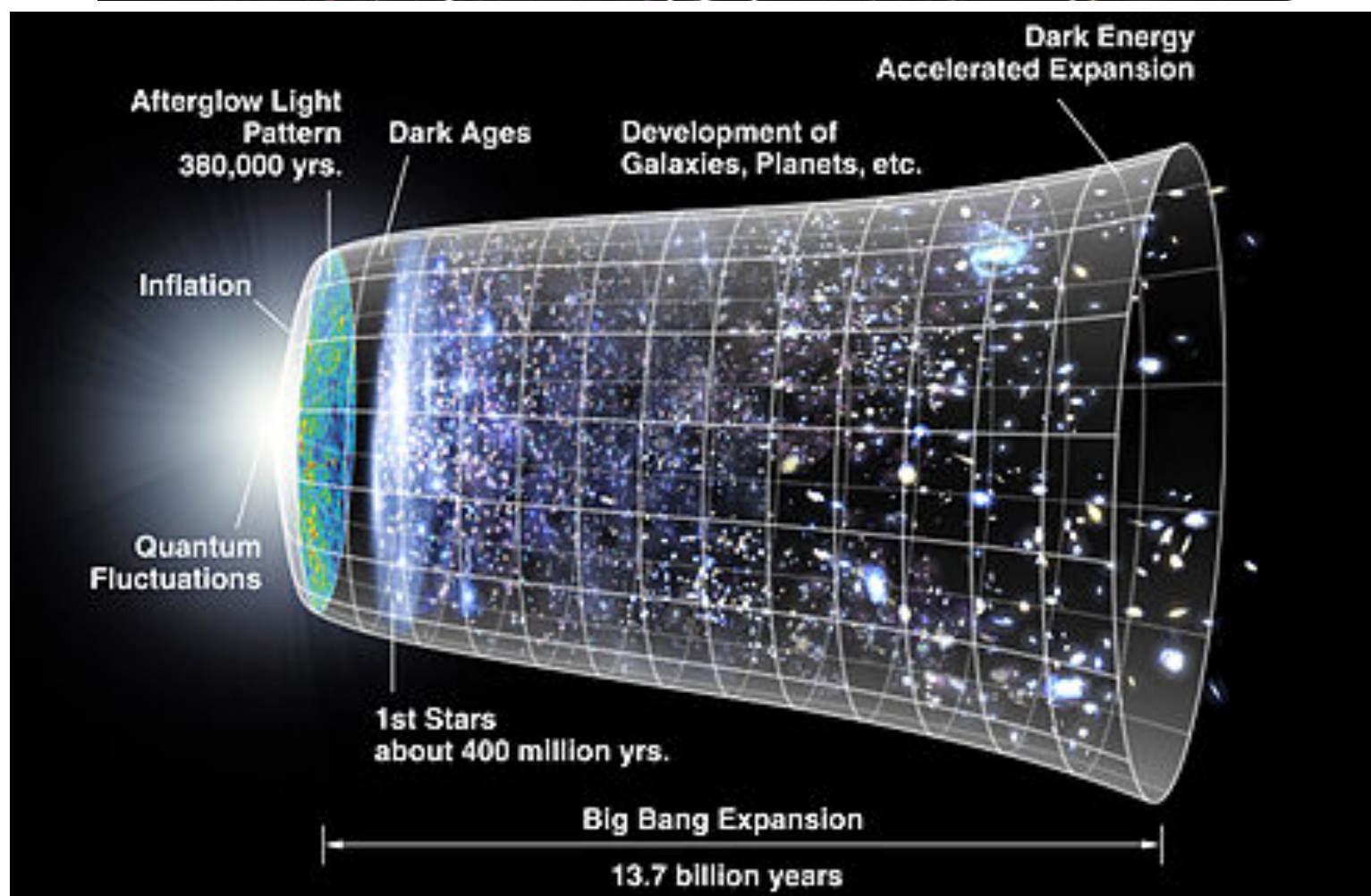
The process of abiogenesis that occurred on Earth, based on mathematical probabilities alone, is repeatable on other planets: atoms forged into light elements, light elements fused into heavier elements in the Sun, then a primordial soup of elements that meshed into inorganic molecules, then electrified and energized to form organic molecules, then prokaryote cells (cells with no nucleus), then eukaryote cells (cells with a nucleus capable of passing on genetic information), to multicellular organisms, to microbes and bacteria, then various species of amphibians, birds, arthropods, reptiles, and mammals. We are the product of Nature's experiment and patience, and Her laws permeate the cosmos. As Michael Faraday put it, "Nothing is too wonderful to be true, if it be consistent with the laws of nature."

Furthermore, according to String Theory, our Universe may only be one of many universes in a multiverse.

Our Universe is roughly 13.7 billion years old. The Earth is approximately 4.55 billion years old and not 6,000 - 10,000 according to Christian (Bible), Jewish (Torah), and Muslim (Quran) textbooks. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are Abrahamic religions—they share the same root and believe that life originated in a corner of the Middle East 6,000 - 10,000 years ago through Creationism. Furthermore, peace is supposed to be a central tenet of these religions but they have been locked in perpetual conflict with no end in sight.

Our spiral Milky Way Galaxy (top) and Universe (bottom).

We are infinitesimally small in the cosmos. We do not need religion to divide us even smaller.



6.What Happens To Us After We Die?

There is an afterlife. We know this from observation. However, there is no evidence supporting the notion of heaven and hell as places of reward and damnation in the afterlife. Our afterlife resides in the memories of those we leave behind. Think of all the great people throughout history who are still with us in spirit because they touched our lives—their souls are their Afterlife. Whether our soul becomes famous or infamous, praised or condemned, admired or damned in the afterlife depends on whether we performed good or evil while we lived.

The good that we do will be remembered after we die—the greater the deeds, the longer the afterlife. Our essence lives on through loved ones and service to Humanity.

Throughout this book, we've met the afterlives of many great people who have enlightened us and shown us the path.

The cycle of life as designed by Nature is: birth and death, birth and death, ad infinitum...When something dies, its energy gives birth to another entity in the cosmos.

Life With Nature In The Cosmos

In summary, the 6 Big Questions of life are:

- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

If the first question can be answered with empirical evidence and by the process of elimination, then the answer to, “Is there a god?”, should be self-evident.

The God Dilemma

We are infinitesimally small in an unimaginably massive cosmos. If there were a god, it would have to be bigger than unimaginably big to have created the Universe and everything in it. If there were a god in this staggering immensity of existence, who is arrogant or delusional enough to think that god would care for her or him? This god, or intelligent designer, would have to be incomprehensibly powerful and its domain so immeasurably vast, that it would not care what we thought of it either way.

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to all the brave women and men throughout history who fought against oppression, injustice, and tyranny. They stood up against oppression, injustice, and tyranny by the sword and of the mind. It is because of their courageous souls that many of us are able to enjoy the liberties and amenities of modern life. They are forever with us in spirit because they advanced knowledge and protected innate human rights for every person. They did what was beneficial for Humanity and were awarded with an everlasting Afterlife—their voices echo in this book.

We must have the courage and resolve to carry on their work. In doing so, we can only hope that our light will shine a fraction as bright as theirs in our Afterlife.

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